



# INDOOR MARKET SHAKE-UP FLOPS

BY CARL JACKSON

**CHANGES to Cannock Indoor Market which saw rent rises for traders who were also made to open up on an extra day have failed to boost trade.**

Since April 1, Cannock Chase Council has charged traders three per cent more while stipulating they must also be there a fourth day – Thursday.

But the moves, which were vigorously opposed, have backfired. A quarter of traders left the market as a result, with prospective stallholders put off by the number of empty units.

Meanwhile, customer footfall between April and the end of September was down 10 per cent compared with the same period in 2016.

A long-standing trader who did not want to be named told the Chronicle: "The changes have improved nothing. It's dismal. It's not just Thursday, it is every other day. There are too many empty stalls and people think it's not worth coming in. It's a real shame, it used to be one of the best markets in the area."

The council estimates that by the end of the financial year the total income will be around £162,000 – a reduction of £29,000 compared with 2016-17. It has also emerged that the authority is in a stand-off with two traders.

## Request

Initially a number of stallholders boycotted the Thursday opening despite having to pay rent for the day anyway. As a compromise the council agreed to waive rent for the day for six months providing that they opened the stall.

Nevertheless, two traders still refuse to operate on Thursday. The situation is detailed in a report to be tabled at a cabinet meeting today (Thursday) when a request from traders for further rent discounts will be discussed.

Nirmal Samrai, housing and partnerships chief, said: "There has been no noticeable increase in rental arrears in respect of the indoor market since the implementation of the savings options."

"However, the indoor market traders consider the additional trading day to be a significant threat to the viability of their businesses and to the future of the Indoor Market and they ask that the Council give them further rent discounts above the 25 per cent discount."

The report adds: "In conclusion the impact of the savings option has worsened the financial position of the Market."

"However, markets across the district and in general have also continued to decline."

## FESTIVE WINDOW MAKES SALON A CLEAR WINNER



Glamour Hair Extensions won Hednesford Town Council's window competition for its design featuring Santa and Rudolph riding a tandem bike

A HAIRDRESSING salon has proved it is a-head of the opposition by winning a window decorating competition.

Glamour Hair Extensions in Market Street, Hednesford, was named the winner for its design featuring Santa and Rudolph riding a tandem bike up a snowy hill.

The business picked up the prize in Hednesford Town Council's annual competition, which ties in with the Christmas lights

switch-on in the town earlier this month. Ward councillor Alan Pearson said: "We had some really stunning window displays, it has been absolutely fantastic."

"To be honest, it is hard to pick just three – you could pick five or six because they are all so good and so many people take part."

"Even if it is not a full design, every shop normally makes a bit of effort," Councillor Pearson added.

"It ties in with the Christmas lights switch-on, which is always fantastic."

"I would like to thank everybody from all the organisations that help to support the town council in doing a fantastic job."

About 60 stalls attended, making it the biggest year yet for the festive event.

It came after Hednesford Town Council stepped in to pay for the lights when Cannock Chase Council withdrew funding.

## COUNCIL

### Outlet village 'will be a tourist spot'

THE leader of Cannock Chase Council has said the new Mill Green designer outlet village will become a 'major tourist destination' as the project took another step forward.

Developers McArthurGlen have unveiled a £160 million deal to build and run Mill Green, which opens in 2020.

Council leader Councillor George Adamson said: "The council has supported the outlet village over many years, and I am pleased that it is now coming to fruition. It will become a major tourist destination."

● Consortium – Page 14

## CHARITY

### Elsa's visit to centre is for a good cause

MEET Elsa from Disney's Frozen this Christmas for a good cause.

Visitors to Cannock Shopping Centre will have the chance to meet the star of Frozen on Saturday and Wednesday from 11am until 2pm.

Children can have their photograph taken with her in return for a donation to the centre's charity partner, Age UK South Staffordshire. Free parking at the centre will be offered on Saturday.

## PROTEST

### Turkey farm demo moved to new date

A DEMONSTRATION to oppose plans for a turkey farm has been rearranged.

The original date of the protest over four turkey rearing buildings at Toft Farm in Penkridge was December 16. Now it will be January 20 at Victoria Park in Stafford.

In one week, 3,125 people signed a petition. A planning application has been submitted to South Staffordshire Council.

## INSIDE SNOW ESCAPE FROM WINTER



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# Spare a thought for the less fortunate

BURNTWOOD is a wonderful place to live and raise a family.

I am very proud to be chairman again, to represent the town, and help with fundraising for so many of the groups and charities that do such an amazing job. My chosen charities this year are Burntwood Breast Care, Burntwood In-Sight Group and St Giles Hospice.

A fundraising event at St Matthews Club, Burntwood, will be held on February 17, with the Beatles tribute band The Beatles.

Tickets are on sale from Burntwood Town Council offices at The Old Mining College Centre in Chasetown. The council are working hard to

A Christmas message from Councillor Mrs **PAMELA STOKES**, chairman of Burntwood Town Council



get health care provisions in place for our growing population, and are passionate about protecting our green belt. We have provided community events such as the Wakes Festival, Play in the Parks, and the Christmas Festival incorporating

the Christmas Tree Lights switch-on at Boney Hay and Chasetown, and hope to continue these growing events next year.

In this current climate of tragedies and evil deeds happening here and abroad, it makes us realise just how fragile life can be.

So spare a thought for those less fortunate, when we're tucking into our Christmas dinner and enjoying time with family and friends. There are some who won't have that pleasure.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish everyone a Happy Peaceful Christmas, and a Healthy and Prosperous 2018, from the elected members and officers of Burntwood Town Council.

# Trust is third worst in UK for A&E wait times

**THE health trust that runs County Hospital is ranked as the third worst in the UK for hitting A&E waiting time targets.**

Latest figures show that in October, the Stafford hospital and Royal Stoke failed to deal with more than one in five patients within four hours – 80 per cent at County, and 78 per cent Royal Stoke.

It means that the University Hospitals of North Midlands NHS Trust is the third worst in England. The national target is 95 per cent. As reported in the Chronicle, the organisation has already blocked all staff from booking weeks off around the Christmas period to combat winter pressure.

In a further move, it has confirmed that it will be opening up two wards at Bradwell Hospital in Newcastle-under-Lyme which will accommodate patients who are well enough to be discharged, freeing up beds for new people arriving via A&E.

## Decision

Marcus Warnes, accountable officer for the Staffordshire Clinical Commissioning Groups, said: "The CCGs continue to work with our community service providers and the local authorities to ensure that the services people need to get them home are in place. However, despite additional capacity coming on line in the community and within people's homes throughout November, acute beds within UHNM remain full.

"The decision to temporarily reopen some of the beds at Bradwell has been made in light of these extreme pressures.

"This is a short-term measure whilst the remaining community services set out in the Winter Plan come online."

"The care that will be provided in the wards will not be the same as previously provided at Bradwell and the wards will be wholly run by UHNM. The beds will temporarily close again once current pressures ease. The CCGs are not providing the funding to reopen the beds.

"Funding has been made available from the additional £350 million made available nationally to support winter pressures."

## Neglected dog covered in dreadlocks



Poppy covered in dreadlocks after years of neglect Photos: RSPCA

THE owner of a dog whose fur was severely matted after years of neglect has been banned from keeping animals for life.

Paul Padmore pleaded guilty at Birmingham Magistrates Court to failing to meet the needs of Yorkshire terrier Poppy. He had not groomed or brushed Poppy the whole time he owned her, the RSPCA said. The court was told that the RSPCA became involved

after a member of the public contacted the animal charity.

When RSPCA inspector Beth Boyd visited the home in Kipling Road, Willenhall, she said she was shocked by the state of the 13-year-old animal. She said: "Poppy was completely covered in dreadlocks on every part of her body. She was even struggling to walk because of all the dreadlocks."

The dreadlocks were sheared off



Poppy was rehomed to a loving owner



The matted fur was 13in long in places

her at a vets, and the fur which came off her weighed 2kg. Some of the dreadlocks were 13.5in long.

Poppy was signed over into the RSPCA's care and rehomed to a new owner but weeks later developed a serious spinal injury and had to be put to sleep.

Padmore, 58, was also given a six-week community order and ordered to pay £100 costs and an £85 victim surcharge.

# Three held in probe on body found off the M54

THREE people have been arrested on suspicion of murder in the investigation into the disappearance of a former Cheslyn Hay worker reported missing nine years ago.

Surjit Takhar's remains were found at the foot of an embankment near the M54 in Telford on August 20, 2015.

It led to a detailed forensic investigation next to the junction four slip road for Shifnal. Two men, aged 50 and 47, and a 48-year-old woman were arrested last Tuesday at separate addresses in Handsworth.



Surjit Takhar

Mr Takhar, who was 37 when he was reported missing from his Oldbury home in October 2008, worked as a delivery driver and was previously a laminator for Gurso Plant & Lining in Landywood Lane, Cheslyn Hay. He was known as Skin among family and friends.

Following the arrests, police searched properties in Handsworth and Telford.

Detective Inspector Jim Munro said: "This is a significant development in this murder inquiry. We are determined to get the bottom of how Surjit met his fate and I would urge anyone with information which could assist our investigation to get in touch."

## Force rewards lengthy service

LONG-SERVING officers and staff were rewarded for their outstanding work with Staffordshire Police at a presentation ceremony at the force's headquarters in Stafford.

Thirty one awards were handed out – including two special accolades.

One went to Special Chief Inspector Janet Riley, who was awarded a bar and rosette for 49 years of service with the Special Constabulary.

The second award was the Society for the Protection of Life from Fire Certificate, which went to a member of the public, Christopher Porcheret, who saved a woman from a burning house.

On the night, officers who volunteered to support the British Virgin Islands Police Force in the wake of hurricanes Irma and Maria were also recognised.

## Jolly in jumpers

OWNERS of Penkridge Market are encouraging stallholders and customers to 'do their bit in a festive knit' on Saturday for Save the Children's Christmas Jumper Day campaign. Canalside Farm Shop and Café near Rugeley is taking part tomorrow (Friday) before holding a fine food and craft market on Saturday.

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# Access at station is raised in Commons

A CALL for disabled access at Rugeley Trent Valley railway station has been made during a debate in Parliament.

Currently, anyone boarding or disembarking from trains on the northbound platform can only do so by using the footbridge, with no lift or ramp to the station entrance, Cannock Chase MP Amanda Milling said.

"This means that passengers have to use other stations to get on and off these trains," she added. "It is essential that our stations provide access to all passengers, and this is why I am calling for improvements to be made at Rugeley Trent Valley."

The MP raised the issue with Transport Secretary Chris Grayling in the debate in the Commons, after raising the issue with London Midland and the consortium which took over the franchise on Sunday.

Ms Milling added: "Over the last few years I have been campaigning for improvements to be made to our local railway stations, including calling for platforms to be extended and the provision of better station facilities.

"At Rugeley Trent Valley these improvements need to include full disabled access for all platforms."

● West Midlands Trains (WMT) was the winning bidder to run the region's rail franchise. WMT is a joint venture, owned by Abellio and its partners for the bid, Mitsui and East Japan Railway Company (JR East).

# Threat to Games dream for Chase

HOPES of Cannock Chase hosting mountain biking events as part of the 2022 Commonwealth Games have suffered a blow after it was announced Birmingham is now facing competition from three rivals.

The second city's chances of securing the Games have taken a dent after competition chiefs revealed that Australia, Canada and Malaysia were now in the running.

It had seemed like Birmingham would be given a clear path after putting forward the only bid before the initial deadline.

But that deadline was then extended when Birmingham's package was branded 'non-compliant' to give other cities an opportunity to come forward.

# Common route

CHASE Ramblers are going on a five-mile easy walk from Milford Common on Sunday, meeting at the common for a prompt 9.30am start instead of the usual rendezvous point. Call 01543 270862. New walkers welcome.

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# Walks festival to kick-start resolutions



Winter is a wonderful time to get outdoors

THE annual Festival of Winter Walks is back with a selection of free rambles in the West Midlands region.

Organised by The Ramblers, the event has been running for more than 25 years and features walks 'to suit everyone'.

Vanessa Griffiths, chief executive of The Ramblers, said: "Winter is a wonderful time to get outdoors and enjoy your surroundings in the fresh air, but it can drop to the bottom of the list among all the competing demands of the holidays.

"Our Festival of Winter Walks of-

fers an easy way to head out for a winter wander with friends and family.

"And if you feel like you've over indulged on turkey and mince pies, it's a great way to help you kick-start those New Year fitness resolutions too.

"If you need a little help in staying motivated, we've got just the thing.

"Sign up to our free online tracker, which allows you to log your walking activity and monitor your progress - a great way to make sure you keep walking."

Walks in the West Midlands region during the festival include Red House

Park, Great Barr, on December 24; Stafford, Christmas Day; Wombourne and Swindon, December 26; Trysull and Seisdon, December 30; Kinver, December 31.

This year the festival is being supported by People's Postcode Lottery.

Its head of charities, Clara Govier, said: "We are delighted that players of People's Postcode Lottery are able to support The Ramblers with their Festival of Winter Walks, which we know will help thousands of people discover the joys of walking."

For details, visit [www.ramblers.org.uk/go-walking](http://www.ramblers.org.uk/go-walking)

# It looks delightful but big freeze takes its toll

**HEAVY snow saw flights and events across Staffordshire and the Black Country cancelled, and hospitals appealing for help to get staff in.**

Planes, trains and traffic were brought to a halt as alerts were issued by police and ambulance chiefs on Sunday urging people not to make journeys unless they had no other option, and with freezing temperatures on Monday and Tuesday, there were more problems to come.

Staffordshire Police on Sunday dealt with 'numerous reports of RTCs and vehicles getting stuck' including an incident on the A5 from the M6 Toll to Muckley Corner, which was closed due to a lorry that had jack-knifed.

A photograph of a gritter overturned in Elford, near Lichfield, was widely shared on Facebook, while on Saturday, motorway police patrolling in hazardous conditions on the M6 were 'astonished' when they clocked a driver doing 109mph near Gailey, Central Motorway Police Group tweeted: "Absolutely unbelievable. Irresponsible, dangerous and stupid."

## Cancelled

Also on Saturday, more than 20 volunteers turned out to help clear snow from the pitch ahead of Chasetown's match against Stamford.

Chronicle readers with an eye for an atmospheric shot took a number of photographs showing the effects of the wintry weather in the Cannock Chase district.

Public transport was badly hit on Sunday with National Express West Midlands making the decision to suspend all services across the region due to roads conditions, while National Rail announced that numerous services were being cancelled due to poor road conditions preventing staff from getting to work.

And flights were cancelled as Birmingham Airport staff worked to clear the runway.

New Cross and Birmingham Heartlands hospitals took to Twitter urging owners of 4x4s to get in touch to help get nurses into work.

The Met Office is forecasting a chilly and breezy end to the week which should be largely dry with spells of sunshine.



An overturned gritter in Elford, near Lichfield



Clearing the pitch before Chasetown's game



Chronicle reader Harry Wilkes's picture of Lichfield Road, Cannock



Snowy Hednesford by John Hibbs



Cannock Chase by Marc Thomas



War cemetery: Richard Pursehouse

## NEWS IN BRIEF

## £220k help for county patients

MACMILLAN Cancer Support gave out grants totalling £220,100 in 2016 to Staffordshire residents who were struggling with financial hardship, the charity has announced.

Across the West Midlands region the charity provided £1,152,245 in grants to help keep cancer patients financially afloat last year.

With hundreds of Staffordshire cancer patients relying on charity handouts to stay above the breadline, Macmillan Cancer Support is urging the Government to change the law so that banks and financial service providers have a legal duty of care to their customers.

## Homes bid fails to score again

PROPOSALS for 123 homes next to Hednesford Town's ground have failed to get planning permission again over parking concerns.

Cannock Chase Council's planning committee had already deferred a decision on Taylor Wimpey's scheme once and they did so again at their latest meeting last Wednesday.

Committee chairman Councillor Sheila Cartwright said: "It has not been refused. It will come back to the committee again. The parking is the main issue. On a match day the parking is horrendous."

## Staff fundraiser for good causes

STAFF at Sainsbury's in Cannock are putting on a festive fundraiser to support their Local Charity of the Year.

Volunteers from the Cannock supermarket and Guide Dogs will be in the store from tomorrow (Friday) to Sunday. It coincides with Local Charities Day tomorrow.

Customers and staff have been supporting local good causes throughout December as part of Sainsbury's Christmas in the Community programme.

Voices in Song sang carols with a member of staff and raised £444.

## Police warning over motorcycle thieves

MOTORCYCLE thieves have been active in the Hawks Green area of Cannock, police have warned.

Two bikes were stolen in Hemlock Way in recent days. In both incidents the culprit arrived riding on the back of a bike being driven by an accomplice and jumped off to steal the bikes, even though they were locked.

Staffordshire Police have urged residents to report motorcycle riders if they are riding with a passenger.

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# COUNTY NEWS

## Willard to receive honorary degree

MICRO-SCULPTOR Willard Wigan will receive an honorary degree from the University of Warwick, it has been announced.

Willard will be made an Honorary Doctor of Letters by the university next year. The micro-artist, from Wolverhampton, crafts the world's smallest works of art and has been recognised in the Guinness Book of World Records. His works include miniature versions of athlete Usain Bolt and cartoon characters Pinocchio and Cinderella. The sculptor, who will receive the degree at a ceremony in January, was awarded an MBE for services to art in 2007.

## Comic comes out to visit exhibit

BRUMMIE comic and rising TV star Joe Lycett has spoken of his pride at a new exhibition opening in his home city looking at the past five decades of sexuality. The ground-breaking 'Coming Out' exhibition marks the 50th anniversary of the partial decriminalisation of male homosexual acts in England and Wales.

Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery will feature works by celebrated artists including Andy Warhol, Francis Bacon and Grayson Perry. Lycett, who has appeared on shows including Live at the Apollo, Never Mind the Buzzcocks and 8 Out of 10 Cats, made a guest appearance at the launch.

## Students join business group

SEVEN students from the Black Country have joined the 2017/2018 cohort of the Lloyds Bank Social Entrepreneurs Programme. The year-long programme offers financial support towards a social business to help solve some of the most pressing issues.

They include Lianne Cargill from Oldbury, Clive Corbett of Kingswinford, Omar Campbell of Walsall, Mandeep Singh, Chloe Dennis-Green, Gurinder Basson, all Wolverhampton and Lorna Phillip of Birmingham.

## Samosa wins Indian food firm gold award

A GREAT Barr-based Indian food firm, co-founded by an Aston University student, has won a gold award for its vegetable samosa.

Sisters Geeta, 30, and Reena Salhan, 24, received the award in the 'food manufactured for food service' category for their business Green Sisters in the FreeFrom Eating Out Awards - who promote excellence in 'free from' food outlets for people with special diets.

# Trolley good effort by former Goodyear staff



**Celebrating a Good-year effort - trolley loads of food bought by former Goodyear workers at Blakemore's wholesale unit in Wolverhampton**

FORMER Goodyear workers have handed over a £2,000 worth of food and toiletries to our Feed A Family This Christmas appeal.

The gift of more than 2,500 items will go towards helping families and individuals in need. Trolleys were loaded with everything from tins of

vegetables, noodle pots and pasta to squash, long-life milk and coffee.

There was also an array of selection boxes, and toiletries including toothbrushes, shampoo and deodorant.

Families with babies were also included with much-needed donations of nappies and wipes among the items

donated by the Goodyear workers 5/344 Transport and General Workers Union Benevolent Fund.

Bosses at Blakemore Wholesale in Wolverhampton helped the group to buy their items during a sale so that their money could go further.

It's almost 12 months since produc-

tion finished at Goodyear but Unite branch chairman Cyril Barrett, who worked there for almost 40 years, said workers were still very much committed to helping the community.

E&S deputy editor Diane Davies said: "The generosity of the Goodyear workers is overwhelming."

# Bishop's blessing



Cycling legend Hugh Porter has been backing the appeal



Rug trader Doris Bradbury makes her contribution to the Feed A Family collection point at Anne Franks's pop up charity stall at Cannock market

**The Bishop of Dudley has spoken of the terrible struggles faced by families who are finding it difficult to put food on the table.**

The Right Rev Graham Usher says he is aware of one heart-breaking example where a father had to ask his daughter to choose between celebrating her birthday or Christmas.

Thankfully, a food bank came to the rescue so that she could have both a birthday gift and be able to enjoy the festive season. The Bishop shared the story as he donated food towards the Express & Star and Chronicle's Feed A Family This Christmas appeal, which is aiming to help hundreds of families



**Bishop of Dudley, Graham Usher** and the vulnerable across the Black Country and Staffordshire. And time is running out for donations, with the appeal finishing on Saturday.

He said: "Christmas is for many of us a wonderful time of family gatherings and eating and drinking too

much. It is rightly a time of joy and celebration. Amidst the fairy lights and tinsel that surround us there are families trying to live with difficult choices. Hard working families on low incomes who are struggling to make ends meet. Refugees who are confused having fled their homes. Elderly people who are frequently lonely.

"In recent weeks I've heard of women in a local refuge who, having fled domestic violence, applied for Universal Credit and have no money as they await the result."

The Bishop asked others to join him in supporting the Feed A Family appeal, joining a host of other notable Midlandsers including Wolverhampton cycling legend Hugh Porter, who has also backed the appeal.

We are asking for gifts of festive

food, such as mince pies, chocolates and Christmas puddings, as well as basics like canned goods, long-life milk, fruit juice, pasta and rice.

Non-food items such as toiletries, baby supplies, new socks and small presents are also welcome during the appeal.

Meanwhile, generous members of the public have donated to Cannock market, at trader Anne Franks's pop-up stall.

Anne sells a variety of items each week for a different charity and has used this month to support the Feed A Family campaign. Customers and fellow traders have also given cat and dog food to ensure pets don't go without either. Anne said: "Everyone has been very kind."



### THE DROP-OFF POINTS:

Express & Star Wolverhampton, 51-53 Queen Street, WV1 1ES; Express & Star Cannock/Walsall office, Queen Square, Cannock WS11 1EA; Oldbury office, Black Country House, Rounds Green Road, Oldbury, B69 2DG.

### DONATIONS CAN ALSO BE DROPPED OFF AT:

Waitrose Wolverhampton, Penn Road, WV2 4NJ; The Midcounties Co-operative Food Store Codsall, 28-32 Wood Lane/Bakers Way, Codsall WV8 1DB. Also at the Saddlers Centre in Walsall. Donations dropped off at those will go to The Well.

# Junction 10 works will mean delays for 2 years

DRIVERS will face nearly two years of delays during the major revamp of the M6 junction 10, council chiefs have revealed.

The £65 million project to reduce congestion, which will see the two main bridges replaced and surrounding roads widened to increase capacity, could start as early as next winter.

But bosses have now revealed it will take around 98 weeks from start to finish, causing chaos for drivers using the route near Walsall and Wolverhampton. It will also mean more misery for Midlands motorway commuters, who currently face delays on the M5 close to the link with the M6.

Walsall Council's cabinet met on Wednesday to authorise officers to contact landowners about plots which will need to be acquired to expand the junction.

The council needs to take on two acres of land permanently and a further 2.5 acres temporarily.

But they will also need to create a temporary construction compound which will either be based at John Hill & Sons scrapyard off the Wolverhampton Road, or the industrial estate of Bloxwich Lane.

Councillor Angela Underhill, who represents Bentley and Darlaston North which contains the junction, hoped the disruption would be worth it in the long-term.

She said: "I am dreading the next couple of years but at least I know it is going to end."

## 450 homes bid to be decided

PLANS to build 450 homes in Norton Canes have moved a step closer.

A detailed planning application has now been submitted to Cannock Chase Council by Persimmon Homes and Bloor Homes, who want to regenerate land to the north of the M6 between Norton Hall Lane and Butts Lane.

The scheme was given outline planning permission in 2015 but the developer has now handed over a more detailed application to the authority, including access information and details over public spaces at the development site.

A planning statement reads: "The application is for a residential development of approximately 449 houses with associated infrastructure, landscaping and public open space areas.

"Access to the site will be via a traffic roundabout to be constructed on Norton Hall Lane and which will also act as a new gateway into Norton Canes from the south-west."

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## 'Get advice' on falls in the wintry conditions

NHS bosses are advising people on how to stay safe and healthy in cold weather.

With temperatures falling, slips and falls become more likely, especially during wet, cold and icy conditions.

The NHS is reminding people that if they are unlucky enough to take a tumble it is not always necessary to visit a GP or go to hospital.

A lot of minor sprains and strains can be treated safely at home. Usually the best course of action for minor sprains and strains is to visit a local pharmacy who can advise on how to take care at home.

Dr Mo Huda, a GP and chair of Cannock Chase Clinical Commissioning Group, said: "If you are unsure where to go for the right medical attention, call NHS 111 for fast and free expert advice. Your local pharmacy can also advise you on over-the-counter remedies to ease pain or swelling.

"At this time of year, elderly relatives or neighbours can become increasingly isolated, as they are worried about slipping on the ice.

"We are encouraging everyone to be a good neighbour and ask if they are warm enough and coping in the cold weather.

"The simplest things could make the biggest difference to their health, including offering to get some food shopping or collect a prescription."

Visit [www.nhs.uk/staywell](http://www.nhs.uk/staywell)

## GPs in 'stock up' plea on medicines

LOCAL GPs are reminding people to stock up on essential medicines for the festive period.

They say medicines to help self-care and tackle minor conditions at home can be bought for just a few pounds.

Dr Mo Huda, a Rugeley GP and chair of the Cannock Chase clinical commissioning group, said: "It is important to plan ahead.

"Over the festive period, the quickest way to get help is from your local pharmacist, who should be your first point of call for advice and support. Pharmacists can also give you expert advice on common illnesses."

For more information on all essential medicine must-haves, visit the NHS Choices website at [www.nhs.uk/pages/home.aspx](http://www.nhs.uk/pages/home.aspx)

## Scarfie campaign

DOCTORS in the Cannock Chase Clinical Commissioning Group are encouraging asthmatics sufferers to wrap a scarf around their nose and mouth to help prevent attacks in cold weather. The advice comes as Asthma UK is running its Scarfie campaign.

# Digital PCSO in battle against cybercrime



The Digital PCSO

STAFFORDSHIRE Police have taken another step in protecting the public and businesses against the threat of cybercrime with their first ever Digital PCSO.

PCSO Matthew Hough-Clewes has landed the position - one of fewer than 10 such PCSOs doing in this specialist role in the UK.

He will spend his time visiting businesses, community groups, and public events to deliver advice and reassurance in person.

But his avatar alter ego will also be engaging with thousands of people via his Twitter feed.

Matt joined Staffordshire Police in 2009 after studying uniform public services.

As he developed in his role Matt realised he enjoyed presenting and educating members of the public around crime prevention.

He said: "Cybercrime is swiftly becoming the most damaging crime a victim can experience. Millions of pounds of money and reams of sensitive data are stolen every year and a lot of this can be prevented with some simple actions.

"I'm here to show you how to

protect yourself online and not be tricked into giving away info to the wrong person. There's lots to do."

Det Sgt Gary Sirrell from the West Midlands Regional Organised Crime Unit's specialist cybercrime team said: "We'll be looking for Matt to get across common sense, simple-to-implement online safety advice that can really help people protect their data, take precautions online and implement safeguards."

Tweet any cyber security questions to Matt at @sp\_digitalpcso  
#saferxmas - Page 19



The 'real' Matt

# Driver gets three years jail for death of teen

**A MOTORIST from Cannock has been jailed for three years for causing the death of a teenage passenger in his car on New Year's Day.**

Gregory Springthorpe, aged 22, pleaded guilty to causing the death by dangerous driving of 18-year-old Travis Jones from Cannock in a crash on a road between Penkridge and Cannock.

Springthorpe, from Platt Street, was also convicted of causing serious injury by dangerous driving. He was given a one-year prison sentence to run concurrently and has been banned for driving for three and a half years. He must take an extended test at the end of that ban.

Springthorpe's grey Honda Civic hit trees just after a humpback bridge, before the turn-off for Mansty Lane, on the B5012 Cannock Road. It happened shortly after 9.30pm on New Year's Day. Despite the efforts of medics and passers by, Mr Jones was pronounced dead at the scene.

Springthorpe pleaded guilty to the charge when he appeared at Stafford Crown Court last week.

Responding to the sentence, Pc Matt Lovatt, from the Regional Collision Investigation Unit, said: "This is a clear example of the tragic consequences of driving dangerously.

"No sentence can ever undo the pain and suffering caused to the family and those involved. "I can only hope that the conclusion of this case helps the family in coming to terms with what happened."

Mr Jones's family released a statement paying tribute to him at the time of his death.

It said: "Travis will be loved and missed by all his family and friends."

Friends also took to social media at the time to pay tribute to Mr Jones while some people also warned about the dangers of the 'horrible road' that had seen a number of accidents.

## Park helpers thanked for hard work



Keeping things green - the park volunteers have worked across a number of sites

A PARKS team held an event on to thank volunteers for their hard work during 2017.

In the past year, 84 people have spent a combined total of 4,000 hours helping at Lichfield District Council's parks and green spaces.

From thinning trees and clearing scrub as part of the Countryside and Parks Conservation Group, and helping keep Beacon Park tidy at the Neaten and Natter monthly sessions, to volunteering for big events such as Lichfield Proms and the Victorian May Day

festivities in Beacon Park, they play a significant role in helping to manage green spaces.

The Friends of Lichfield Historic Park also play a part, meeting each month to suggest ideas for how sites can be improved, and many go on to volunteer at events and activities.

Other volunteers have also helped with gardening, making props for events and running a range of workshops.

The park volunteers have worked across a number of sites

including Beacon Park, Stowe Pool and Fields, the council's garden in the National Memorial Arboretum, Muckley Corner, Pipe Hill, Christian Fields, Shortbatts Park, Rake Hill, Eights Croft, Ironstone Road, Darnford Park, Sainte Foy Avenue, Wharf Lane and more.

Councillor Iain Eadie, cabinet member for leisure, said: "We're always keen to encourage more volunteers to help at our parks.

"It's a good way to meet new people and benefit local wildlife."

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Groups awarded £7,000 in grants

COMMUNITY groups in Staffordshire have been awarded grants to make their area a better place to live.

Veolia, working in Partnership with the county council, presented funding totalling £7,000 at the latest EnviroGrant Awards. Among the recipients were the Friends of Etchinghill, who will use the funding to further enhance the hill thanks to new tools.

Veolia operates the energy recovery facility at Four Ashes. Midlands West director Steve Mitchell said: "We are delighted to support local groups through the EnviroGrant scheme."

For information about the scheme, email [hilary.hampton@veolia.com](mailto:hilary.hampton@veolia.com)

### Police seize £1.5m cannabis at farm

POLICE discovered one of Staffordshire's 'largest and most sophisticated' cannabis factories when officers raided a chicken barn.

The haul of 3,100 cannabis plants found at Three Angels Farm in Ivetsey Road, Wheaton Aston, last Tuesday had a street value of £1.5 million.

Six men, aged 17 to 44, were arrested. The men are from the UK and Albania and were taken into custody at Watling police station. Insp Richard Meaden said: "This is the largest and most sophisticated cannabis factory I've ever experienced."

### Residents to help shape civic budget

LICHFIELD District Council is asking its 45,000 residents to give their views to help shape its budget.

This financial year, the local authority will have spent just over £11 million on local services.

It receives just over £6m in council tax to help fund this, and the rest is funded through business rates, core government grant, New Homes Bonus and income.

The Your View questionnaire is live until 5pm on Friday, December 22. It is available online at [www.lichfielddc.gov.uk/yourview](http://www.lichfielddc.gov.uk/yourview)

### Quartet to add musical flavour at farm event

A MUSICAL quartet will be performing at a Christmas Event at Canalside Farm near Rugeley on Saturday.

The festive day, which will run from 9am to 5pm, will also feature workshops for children, mulled wine and Christmas tastings.

Staffordshire brewery Slaters will also be there with a wide range of products for customers to try, including an ale made exclusively for Canalside, which is situated just off the A51.

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IN MY VIEW

with Mark Andrews



# Food critic needs to Shed his prejudices

YEARS ago, a long-haired food critic named Jay Rayner gave his verdict on the culinary tastes of Black Country folk. His summary is best described as withering.

He said there was not a single good place to eat in the Black Country "because the local population doesn't want good food." A bit harsh, I thought, but at the time put it down to regional differences in taste. With the proviso, of course, that cosmopolitan liberal London tastes are superior to those of the rest of the country.

What Mr Rayner did not really express, though, was what his precise taste was. He told us he didn't like cow pie from a pub in Netherton, which he said was "not quite the a""hole of the world, but bloody close". But he didn't say what type of food he did like. Well he has now.

Recently he took to Twitter to share his thoughts on an achingly trendy new restaurant in south London called The Shed. He opined: "At last: a restaurant that recognises food is all about mood. Of all the shed-based experiences out there this one sounds like the best."

He added he was very keen to try out a dish called "Contemplation", which looked delightful in the soft-focus pictures on the restaurant's website.

The Shed was, in fact, a wind-up. It was created by a chap called Oobah Butler to highlight the absurdity of the people who rave about supposedly cutting-edge food, and the perils of reading too much into online reviews. "Contemplation", like his other dishes "Empathetic" and "Comfort" were mocked up using such delightful ingredients as shaving foam, household paint, plus a couple of toilet blocks to give it that special je ne sais quoi.

For what it's worth, I think Mr Rayner is wrong. People in the Black Country appreciate good food. It's just that it would take more than a few pretentious words about "mood" to persuade us to eat the contents of the bathroom stool.

That said, if anyone fancies a whip-round to help Mr Rayner achieve his dream of tasting Contemplation, I'd be delighted to chip in.

IT'S here. It's official. You can always tell when the Christmas celebrations have started in earnest when you get the first reports of the Christmas grottos that don't quite live up to the make-believe expectations.

One of the first off the block was the one at Gracechurch Shopping Centre in Sutton Coldfield, where Father Christmas failed to show up because he had been caught in snow. Elf 'n' safety, one presumes.

## Yobs now believe that the courts can't harm them



Pamela Stephenson – spoke frankly about her friendship with the royals



Prince Harry – it is said he knew he should wed somebody from showbiz



Christine Keeler – virtually impossible for parents to protect today's children

# CCTV holds no fear for all these thugs

THE most chilling CCTV footage of the week shows two thugs on a Tube train in London. They attacked a young man, half-strangled him in a headlock, took his mobile phone and threatened to stab him until he "apologised" for being gay. What made this incident so shocking was not the level of violence, nor even the hatred behind the attack. It was that these thugs must have known their faces would be caught on CCTV, and simply didn't give a damn. Were they out of their skulls on drugs, or made mad by religious fervour? Perhaps it's more likely that they are part of that vast feral army of youths who, having been caught and cautioned repeatedly by the police, have come to believe the law cannot harm them. CCTV was supposed to be a deterrent. It is not. The courts are supposed to be a deterrent. They are not. And as you look into the dead-eyed faces of those two yobs on the Tube, you can only pray your paths do not cross with theirs, for the cameras on the wall will not save you and the judges will not give you justice.

THE shop doorways seem fuller than ever with homeless sleepers. This is an existence which depends entirely on the generosity of people with spare cash. But the advent of contactless debit cards coupled with the plans to strip out thousands of high-street cash machines, as announced last week, means we may soon become a cashless society. And what then? "Any spare change, mate?" "No change at all, pal."

I WAS in a shop queue behind a woman who was buying 15 chocolate oranges. "It's the grandchildren," she gushed. "They all want an orange in their stockings." I guess it would be unfestive to point out that, despite the name,

## THE BEST OF PETER RHODES



a great fatty globe of milk chocolate laced with orange essence is not actually an orange. By way of comparison, an orange contains 87 calories, a chocolate orange about 800.

WE live in an age of entrepreneurs, chancers and wide boys. East of England Co-op has just started selling rice, crisps, pasta and other "dry goods" that have passed their best-before date for just 10p. Are they on eBay at 50p yet?

AND off to our first Xmas meal of the season, one of those events where you have to specify the menu in advance. Seriously, how many of us know, half way through November, whether, on a Sunday in early December, we might fancy chicken pate or prawns? One easy decision was to eliminate broccoli and Stilton soup from the equation. Broccoli and Stilton, for gawd's sake. Doesn't the very thought of it make you heave?

A FRIEND recalls another Stilton experiment that didn't quite work. On the menu in a country pub some years ago, mackerel with Stilton sauce looked strangely tempting. Turned out to be a curious blend of oily fish with that Stilton hint of damp, unwashed sports kit left in the locker all year. Well all I can say to that is Bon appetit.

IF the gossips are to be believed, Prince Harry said he knew he should wed somebody from showbiz just days before he met Meghan

Markle. Not because he wanted to meet someone glamorous but because celebrities and royals understand the pleasures and perils of fame and how to deal with them. This rang a bell. Ages ago, I interviewed Pamela Stephenson and she spoke very frankly about her and her husband Billy Connolly's friendship with the royals, notably Prince Charles. There was, she said, a common bond between the Windsors and the Connollys based simply on being famous and coping with the fans. And now she's Lady Connolly.

OUR changing language. Some long-term cannabis users in the States have reported unexplained episodes of screaming and vomiting. The condition has been named "scromiting."

CHRISTINE Keeler has died, aged 75. In the same week a major police operation against online sex stalkers revealed how it is virtually impossible for parents to protect today's children from the depravity of adults. Back in the 1960s, controlling your kids' access to the worldwide media was much simpler. I remember my father getting up early to hide the Daily Express, thus preventing us kids from reading a single juicy word about the Profumo Affair.

THE Great Puffin Conspiracy continues, this time on Blue Planet II (BBC1). It is rife among naturalists and its mantra is: "I can make my puffs look bigger than yours." Using zoom lenses, full-frame images and a lack of any means of comparison, puffs appear to be as big as turkeys. In real life as one wildlife tourism website warns its customers: "They are always smaller than people expect."

TALKING POINT



# Why make such a meal over Christmas?

SCROOGE. Killjoy. Grinch. Party-pooper. These are just some of the comments I've had to endure over the years . . . and all because I'm not a fan of Christmas.

It seems just because I can't get carried away with the idea of buying overpriced presents for people who don't really want them, and don't find it easy to enter into the party spirit I'm a mean, curmudgeonly misery who doesn't want anyone to enjoy the festive season.

And yet nothing could be further from the truth. I love to see people looking forward to a fortnight of over-indulgence and slothfulness in the name of merriment.

It's just that I don't really get why we all have to be involved.

Just this month, two things highlighted this divide in my eyes. The first was the annual discussion over when and where to have the office "do" and who to invite.

Personally, I don't enjoy eating out, except when absolutely necessary. I get exasperated with the rigmarole of perusing the menu, waiting to order, and finally trying to attract someone's attention to get the bill. So that was that. I gave it a miss.

The second reminder was when one of my favourite radio programmes was cut by 15 minutes so the station could promote its Christmas charity appeal. I've got nothing against charity – I regularly send a large donation to my chosen good cause – but again I had the feeling that I was being browbeaten into making a gesture I'm not that wild about.

It set me thinking about a news article in which the idea of loneliness at Christmas was questioned. The report pointed out how many people feel more lonely in the summer.

It seems with all the activities going on outdoors, and relatives and friends away on holiday, a large proportion of the population living alone might prefer Christmas time, no matter how little attention they receive around now.

So, where does that leave us? My father used to say once the presents had been opened, and the turkey dinner polished off, that was Christmas over and done with for another year. In my view, he was right, especially in view of all the fuss and palaver in the "run-up to the big day" as the advertising industry likes to put it.

To sum up, I'll leave you with one of my favourite observations on Christmas which springs to mind every year. It came from comedy actress Goldie Hawn, who said "Why don't they move Christmas to July when the shops aren't so busy?"

It always make me smile, even though it might provoke a debate for another day. In the meantime, goodwill to you all.

STEVE PARLETT

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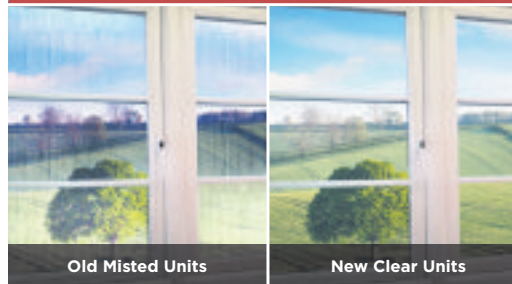
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# 50ft cliff fall victim slipped to her death

## Trust taking over centre



Burntwood Leisure Centre – the takeover will be from February 1

BURNTWOOD Leisure Centre will be handed to a trust from next year. Lichfield District Council's cabinet has approved a proposal for Freedom Leisure to take over the venue, as well as Friary Grange Leisure Centre in Lichfield, from February 1.

It is the same organisation which has recently obtained a lucrative 10-year contract to run a host of sites in Stafford including three council leisure centres, the Gatehouse Theatre and Stafford Castle.

Councillor Iain Eadie, leisure

chief at Lichfield District Council, said: "Outsourcing will help us to use our resources effectively."

"Where Freedom has taken over the operation of leisure centres in other areas of the country, such as Wrexham and Arun, participation levels have gone up, significant investment into the facilities has taken place, and local communities have responded well to the wider opportunities to live healthier, more active lifestyles, and to make the most of their leisure time," he added.

A THRILL-SEEKER from Penkridge died when she slipped and plunged up to 50ft onto a ledge below, an inquest heard.

Sarah Brewster, aged 21, had planned to leap into the water of a lagoon in north Wales while a friend filmed her.

The Blue Lagoon, near Fairbourne in Gwynedd, was a popular spot.

But two of Sarah's female friends felt that the leap from the cliffs was unsafe, coroner Dewi Pritchard Jones was told at the hearing in Caernarfon.

He concluded that Sarah, a waitress, who was killed instantly by a fractured skull, died due to an accident.

The inquest heard that she and her friends Katie Taylor and Victoria Walters had driven to the area at the end of May and first of all enjoyed a swim in the lagoon, with video recordings being made on mobile phones. Miss Taylor was too upset to give evidence but instead her statement was read. She said Sarah, a friend for 13 years, had suggested the trip.

She added that Sarah, a former pupil of Wolgarston High School in Penkridge, said she was going to leap from the cliffs into the lake and asked for it to be filmed – possibly for her Facebook profile.

Miss Taylor said: "I told her I wasn't happy and it didn't look safe."

Sarah then fell feet first and landed on the ledge. The coroner said he believed Sarah lost her footing, adding: "To jump into the lake she would have to have done the equivalent of a long jump to clear the ledge. Leaping over an obstacle like this ledge to reach the water is something extremely dangerous."



Sarah Brewster



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# The painful truth of serious money worries

I AM a senior nurse in a very busy emergency department (ED).

I want people to read this and take it at face value that what I am saying is true and probably happens elsewhere up and down country.

This week I have met a number of people that have made an attempt to take their own life because of serious money worries and difficulties claiming

their benefits to the degree they cannot afford to feed themselves and in some cases their children. I want people to know that this is becoming a more and more frequent reason for attendance to hospital in recent months.

When I meet these people, it fills me with pain and sadness. It also fills me with absolute anger that the rhetoric we hear is that 'unemployment is at its

lowest . . . more people in work than ever before, under this government".

I wish the people who actually believe that and deny poverty is right in front of us would walk a mile in these people's shoes. I dread to imagine what will happen when Universal Credit is rolled out in its current form.

**CONCERNED**  
Staffordshire

## Spare time for visit or phone call

MANY people with the chronic, neurological condition ME tell us they feel very lonely and isolated at this time of year.

A visit, phone call or simply a thoughtful card from a friend could make a positive difference – so if you know someone with ME, let them know you are thinking of them this festive season.

If you have ME and you need information and support, call us on 0117 927 9551 (we're here until 4pm on December 22, and reopen on January 3) or join one of our friendly online forums, open 24/7. You can also read advice from Rose, who has ME, in her article on coping with Christmas alone at [www.actionforme.org.uk/alone-at-xmas](http://www.actionforme.org.uk/alone-at-xmas)

**SONYA CHOWDHURY**  
Action for ME

## Thoughtless truckers gave us hill to climb

UNLIKE many, if the social media channels are to be believed, I believe Staffordshire highways have done a good job during this particularly harsh, snowy weather.

I saw gritters and snow ploughs out over the weekend and main roads did get moving pretty quickly on Sunday.

Why complainers feel their small estate roads deserve priority is beyond me. Particularly when many A roads were blocked by thoughtless lorry drivers.

It clearly came to a surprise to HGV drivers that there are a good number of inclines in the county. Bus companies took a more sensible approach and cancelled services.

If those lorries weren't delivering body organs or some other priority load then surely they should have stayed put.

**PAIGE DAVIES**  
Hednesford

## Praise for our hospital

WITH all the bad news and complaints about the NHS and our hospitals, I felt I must write and praise our local Cannock Hospital. Trying to get an appointment at your own GP surgery in an emergency for which you have to pre-book before the emergency happens, but able to get an appointment to see the out of hours doctor on a Sunday at Cannock Hospital, I have nothing but admiration and thanks. Long may our hospital continue.

**GRATEFUL PATIENT**  
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You'll then be able to send your stamps off to RNIB in the post – it really is that easy!

**AMANDA HOLDEN**  
RNIB supporter

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

**POST**  
Cannock & Rugeley Chronicle,  
Chronicle Editorial,  
51-53 Queen Street  
Wolverhampton, WV1 1ES

Letters should be brief and MUST include name, address and telephone number. The Editor reserves the right to condense letters.

**Code of Practice:**  
Our policy is to correct errors as soon as we can. The Chronicles adhere to the Editors' Code of Practice, which can be seen at [www.ipso.co.uk](http://www.ipso.co.uk). If you are unhappy with the accuracy of a

### EMAIL

[cannock.chron@expressandstar.co.uk](mailto:cannock.chron@expressandstar.co.uk)



story, write to The Editor, Chronicles, 51-53 Queen Street, Wolverhampton, WV1 1ES

OVERNIGHT we had the first snowfall, and as usual, a lot of drivers think it is OK to drive around with their car windows, and lights, covered in snow?

A lot couldn't see out the rear window, and others would have struggled to see out the side windows.

I wonder how many of them know they are breaking the law, under The Road Vehicles Lighting Regulations, and Construction and Use acts.

**D EVANS**  
Rugeley

**CAROL MCCORMICK**  
Stafford

## Cinema chiller

IT'S wonderful news that the Apollo cinema in Stafford is to remain open. However, I must stress that the new owners ought to deal with the heating problem they have had for years.

**CAROL MCCORMICK**  
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Wishing you all a...

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## Ladies told of charity missions

The Ridwares WI

PIPPA Datham gave details of her charity walk coast to coast in Costa Rica, while Rosie Taylor, a 14-year-old Hart School, Rugeley, pupil, told the WI ladies about her quest to raise funds for a trip to Ecuador in 2019.

During the four-week expedition, organised by Camp International, she will work in the local community to build classrooms for children with no access to education and to improve sanitation. Rosie needs to raise £4,890 to cover the cost.

The trip will range from the Andes to the Amazon and there may be a chance to visit The Galapagos Isles.

A group of WI members attended the Staffordshire Federation Markets Day at the County Showground. In the morning performer Adam Smith took the 700-strong audience on a tour of the 'World of the Musical'. The afternoon speaker was the broadcaster John Craven, of Newsround and Countryfile fame.

The Ridwares WI wishes to thank Gwyneth Brandrick for her generous contribution which has enabled beautiful plants to be purchased for the heart flower bed and monies towards the village Christmas lights.

There is no meeting in December as The Ridwares WI will be holding their Christmas party. The first new year meeting will be on January 16, author Lorraine Hellier will talk on 'My Writing Journey'.

## Military talks hold members' attention



Col Logan, president Val Jones and Cadet Sgt Rachel Humphries

CANNOCK Soroptimists enjoyed a double military presentation at their November speaker meeting with addresses from Col Richard Logan, Commandant of the Staffordshire Army Cadets and Cadet Staff Sgt Rachel Humphries, recently awarded the top honour of Lord Lieutenant Cadet.

Listeners were surprised to learn that Army Cadets belong to one of the oldest and largest youth volunteer organisations in the country: it is now 150 years old and there are currently more than 39,000 cadets, all aged between 13 and 18 years. Girls were first admitted in the 1980s, in fact Rugeley was the first detachment nationally to take girls. Today 30 per cent of cadets are girls.

## Funds raised to tune of £500

THE Friends were delighted with their latest fundraising event – a concert at St Mary and St Luke's Church in Shreshill performed by Voices of Tantalum, a small group of singers led by husband and wife team Larry and Linda Smith.

Friends of St Giles

They presented a varied programme of music, including some Christmas pieces, getting everyone in the mood for the season fast approaching.

SI Cannock & District

Rachel is 17 and joined at 13 as an extremely shy and retiring young teenager, the only female in her detachment. She provided an enthusiastic account of how she slowly built up a network of friends, increased confidence and social awareness. As a Master Cadet, the highest level, Rachel meets and interacts with cadets all over the country.

Her talk was extremely well received, everyone was so impressed with the level of confidence she displayed.

Chairman Janette Arrowsmith was pleased to welcome Amanda Milling MP to join the audience.

Some very generous raffle prizes had been donated and thanks to everyone's incredible generosity, £500 was raised for the hospice.

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# Judge me on the job I do – Gavin hits back

**GAVIN** Williamson has hit back at critics who have branded him too inexperienced to be the Defence Secretary, insisting: "Judge me on the job I do."

The former Chief Whip came in for criticism after he was handed the key Cabinet post by Theresa May following the resignation of his predecessor Michael Fallon.

Opponents of the South Staffordshire MP accused him of effectively persuading the Prime Minister to give him the job, while others have argued that he was chosen ahead of better qualified candidates.

Speaking exclusively to the Chronicle's sister paper, the Express & Star, Mr Williamson insisted that he would be 'a strong voice' for Britain's armed forces in Westminster.

He also defended Mrs May's record at Number 10, describing her as 'utterly selfless' and committed to delivering the very best for the UK.

Mr Williamson said: "The Prime Minister chooses her Cabinet. I am extremely humbled and honoured to have this job. You are always going to get criticism in any job. I just hope that people judge me on the job I do."

"I don't want to be a general, an admiral or an air marshal. We already have brilliant ones of those."

"I want to be the one who is standing up for them. I want to be the person who is there to fight their corner in the world of politics and be a strong voice for them at the Cabinet table."

The MP was appointed Defence Secretary on November 2 following Mr Fallon's decision to step down after admitting his behaviour towards women in the past had 'fallen short'.



Gavin Williamson has called on his critics to judge him on his achievements as Defence Secretary



The MP described PM Theresa May as 'selfless'



Michael Fallon quit as Defence Secretary

Mr Williamson had been appointed as Chief Whip by Theresa May in July 2016, having played a major role in her successful leadership campaign. Prior to that he served as David Cameron's Parliamentary Private Secretary.

Describing Mrs May as an 'inspiration', Mr Williamson said: "I have been extremely lucky to have worked

with two Prime Ministers incredibly closely. I have worked under Theresa May as Chief Whip and now Defence Secretary and you can see someone who is incredibly motivated by public service and duty to the nation."

"She is utterly selfless and committed to deliver what is best for this country."



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Wednesday 27 December 2017	Thursday 28 December 2017
Thursday 28 December 2017	Friday 29 December 2017
Friday 29 December 2017	Saturday 30 December 2017

Normal collection days until  
Friday 22 December 2017

### New Year Collection Changes

Normal collection day...	Will be collected on...
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Tuesday 2 January 2018	Wednesday 3 January 2018
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Councillor is first to win exchange prize



Zaphne Stretton and her husband Michael Stretton  
Photograph courtesy of Silke Wilhelm-Maemecke

COUNCILLOR Zaphne Stretton has been awarded the Etienne-Bach Prize by the Evangelical Church in Datteln.

Councillor Stretton received the award whilst attending a service in Datteln last month. This is the first time that this prize has ever been awarded and was given to Councillor Stretton in recognition of her commitment to reconciliation and peace between the British and the German people.

The Etienne Bach Prize honours women and men, or initiatives, who work for more understanding and exchange between people of different culture, religion or nationality.

Lieutenant Etienne Bach was a French Officer after the First World War, who was in charge of the Datteln administration during the occupation of the Ruhr in 1923-25.

Councillor Stretton attended the service in Datteln with her husband Michael, Cannock Chase Council leader Councillor George Adamson, managing director Tony McGovern and chairman Councillor Alan Dudson. Councillor Stretton said she was 'overwhelmed' to learn she had won the prize.

# Last effort fails as bus cuts given go-ahead

**A LAST DITCH attempt to prevent bus service cuts in Staffordshire from being scrapped has failed.**

Staffordshire County Council currently supports the county's network of buses and Dial-A-Ride services by paying out £2.6 million a year. But next April, the subsidy will be reduced to £1.3m.

The decision had previously been approved by cabinet chiefs but was called in by Labour group leader Councillor Sue Woodward, who made one last attempt to save services for the vulnerable after calling in the decision for further scrutiny at a meeting last week.

Councillor Woodward has said that the decision will have a 'significant impact' on some of the most vulnerable people in Staffordshire, potentially isolating them.

Speaking at the meeting, she said: "I feel the withdrawal of the subsidy at this point is going to make things worse for residents at a time when our bus services are already lacking."

"It is disappointing that our MPs and other senior politicians across the county

**By Jordan Harris**

didn't get involved with the consultation, because the move will have a significant impact."

The final decision to go ahead with the plans follows a public consultation completed by 2,000 people.

Four options were given, with some raising fears over getting to the doctors, visiting friends and family, and doing their shopping.

However, the changes will now officially go ahead in April.

Councillor Mark Deaville, cabinet member for commercial at Staffordshire County Council, said: "This has been an extremely comprehensive consultation and has been an example of good communication."



*Steve and all the staff at Goliath would like to say a huge thank you to all their customers for an extremely busy 2017, and wish them all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.*

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# Homeless children total is 'highest in a decade'

SOME 470 children in Staffordshire and the Black Country will be homeless and in temporary accommodation this Christmas, a new report reveals.

Wolverhampton tops the list with 138 children currently homeless, followed by Sandwell with 119, and Walsall having 116 youngsters in emergency hostels or bed and breakfast.

Lichfield has four times as many homeless children as Dudley - 27 as opposed to seven - while Cannock Chase, South Staffordshire, Stafford and Wyre Forest report fewer than five youngsters in temporary accommodation.

The report, by the charity Shelter, warns that at least 16 families become homeless every day in the West Midlands, and with the country still at the mercy of a worsening housing crisis, 2017 has seen the highest numbers of homeless children in a decade.

## Emergency

The charity is calling on the public to support its Christmas appeal.

As part of its survey, Shelter carried out in-depth interviews with children and their parents living in emergency B&Bs and hostels, widely considered the worst type of temporary accommodation.

They found that every family lived in a single room which significantly disrupted the children's ability to play, do homework and carry out any kind of daily routine.

Shelter Birmingham Hub manager Vicky Hines said: "It's a national scandal that the number of homeless children in Britain has risen every year for the last decade. No child should have to spend Christmas without a home, let alone almost 5,000 children in West Midlands. We're asking people to help a homeless family and make giving to Shelter their new Christmas tradition." To support the appeal visit [www.shelter.org.uk](http://www.shelter.org.uk)

## Festive favourites sing-along



Carols by Candlelight is the Arboretum's showpiece Christmas event

THE National Memorial Arboretum's showpiece Christmas event, the annual Carols by Candlelight evening in Heroes Square, takes place on Saturday from 6pm.

Surrounded by illuminated trees and with music from the Burton Salvation Army Band, visitors can enjoy a traditional sing-along to some festive favourites.

Early arrival is recommended. Carol books and candles will be available to purchase. Admission is free but donations are appreciated. Parking charges apply. Meanwhile,

the Arboretum's Remembrance Centre is home to a festive memory tree adorned with hand-written messages to loved ones.

For a small donation, visitors can add their own 'bauble' which will stay in place over the Christmas period, as a way of remembering loved ones at this special time of year.

Visit [www.thenma.org.uk](http://www.thenma.org.uk) for further information

● A photographic exhibition, 'Burma Veterans: Unforgettable', is running at the National Memorial Arboretum until February 25.

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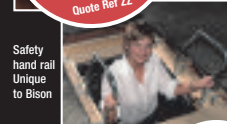
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## Council to ban sales of plastic

CANNOCK Chase Council has committed to ending the sale of single-use plastic.

The council backed a motion to prohibit the sale of items such as plastic bags and bottles in council buildings following the completion of a government consultation on how the littering of plastic, metal and glass drinks containers could be reduced.

Councillors also resolved to ask the cabinet to 'develop a robust strategy' to make the council a single-use-plastic-free authority.

Councillor Paul Woodhead, leader of the Green group on the council, said: "We've been doing regular litter picks throughout the last few years and it can be dispiriting to see how bad the littering is in the area, and how much plastic is discarded."

# Fatal crashes prompt warning to motorists

**DRIVERS in Staffordshire are being warned to take extra care on the roads following a number of fatal incidents.**

Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service is making the plea for extra care after four people died and 54 were injured in 56 crashes in the county last month.

Among the advice for drivers from the fire service is to get tyres checked monthly and to make sure all windows, mirrors and lights are cleared of snow and ice before setting off on a journey.

Glynn Luznyj, the service's director of prevent and protect, said: "The roads can be very dangerous at this time of year as the temperature drops and we start to see treacherous conditions including heavy rain, strong winds snow and ice."



Glynn Luznyj - 'please take care'

"It is important that motorists keep this in mind and adjust their speed for the weather conditions and ensure their vehicles are fit to be on the roads before getting behind the wheel."

"We cannot stress enough how vital it is to ensure your car windows, mirrors and lights are properly cleared of ice and snow before you drive."

"We understand that it can be a burden to de-ice your car in the morning but it is a few minutes of time that can potentially save your life or someone else's."

Mr Luznyj also warned motorists to look out for hidden dangers during wintry weather.

"You cannot always tell if there is black ice on the roads so it is important to take note of weather warnings and drive at a speed that is appropriate for the conditions," he said.

"One death in the county is one too many to us but to see four in one month is very concerning, as is the amount of people who have been injured in crashes in November. Please take care on the roads."

## School cash is a cereal thriller



The breakfast club at Staffordshire University Academy

A HEDNESFORD school has been given a cash boost by cereals firm Kellogg's.

Staffordshire University Academy has been given an undisclosed amount of the money by the firm which it will put towards improving its Breakfast Club facilities.

The Marston Road school says the money will allow it to invest in new equipment and offer a wider range of food, drink and social activities for its pre-school club.

The club, which started three years ago, offers students a free breakfast before school starts. Around 40 students each day take the school up on its offer.

Teaching assistant George Massey said: "We believe that starting the day with a healthy, nutritious breakfast in a friendly and inclusive environment sets every student up for a positive and productive day of learning. Breakfast Club offers the students a secure place to start each school day, with a warm welcome."

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WOLVERHAMPTON  
MAGAZINE

# Consortium to build and run £160m outlet village

THE developers behind Wolverhampton's Westside leisure scheme have unveiled a £160 million deal to build and run Cannock's new Mill Green designer outlet village.

U+I says it has become part of a joint venture with a consortium managed by McArthurGlen, which has developed and runs nearly two dozen designer outlets across the UK and Europe, including Cheshire Oaks. McArthurGlen will run the new Mill Green outlet.

The consortium includes the Richardson family, founded by twins Don and Roy, who built the Merry Hill shopping centre. Don Richardson died in 2007 and the business is now run by Roy's sons. In recent years it has been heavily involved in designer outlet developments with McArthurGlen.

Cannock Chase councillors have already backed the scheme and are hoping it will launch in the summer of 2019.

## Transfer

The original plans were for a £115m retail scheme, but a statement from U+I talks of a 26,500 sq m (285,000 sq ft) scheme with a price tag of £160m.

U+I says its subsidiary DS Cannock had an option to acquire the scheme.

After a number of conditions in connection with the development of the site are fulfilled DS Cannock will transfer its right to acquire the site and certain work in progress to the joint venture vehicle Cannock Designer Outlet Ltd Partnership.

Matthew Weiner, chief executive of U+I Group, said: "Our project in Cannock demonstrates some of our core strengths as a business - securing complex planning consents and creating great mixed-used places that bring communities together and stimulate the local economy."

"We are pleased to have signed conditional agreements with McArthurGlen."

## Children meet TV poet



The pupils from Penkridge Middle School with Michael Rosen

PUPILS from Year 6 at Penkridge Middle School travelled to Chase Grammar School in Cannock to take part in a poetry workshop led by renowned poet Michael Rosen.

A former children's Poet Laureate, he has written more than 140 books and made many TV appearances. The Penkridge children, who have been reading Rosen's 'The Wicked Tricks of Till Owlgyglass' in class, were treated to poems from some of the pupils from the other schools there.

Rosen shared many of his poems, giving opportunities for audience

participation. The morning continued with a lengthy question and answer session during which Rosen told the enthralled audience about his career as a poet and author.

Class teacher Paul Mobberley said some of the Penkridge pupils were also able to have a private chat with Michael about inspirations for the book they are reading, and some were interviewed for the BBC and made a brief appearance on Midlands Today that evening.

At the end of the session all of the children were given a new pen as a thank you for attending.

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The investment in Birmingham New Street station and the Grand Central plaza above it saw passenger numbers rise

# Ticket sales booming as more use trains

IT is the second city – and now Birmingham officially has the busiest railway station outside London.

Birmingham New Street was ranked the sixth busiest station in the country with 42.3 million entries and exits in the last financial year. In November 2015, the Queen officially opened the new-look station after its £750 million refurbishment.

London's Waterloo topped the list of Britain's busiest stations with 99.4m – the 14th consecutive year it has been the most used station.

In total, it was estimated there were more than 2.9 billion entries and exits at all 2,560 rail stations in Britain – an increase of 0.4 per cent on the previous year. The figures came from the Office of Rail and Road.

There were more than 150 million entries and exits across the West Midlands, compared with 143 million in 2015-16 – a rise of 5.2 per cent. Stations in the Black Country and Staffordshire saw more than 845,000 extra journeys made over the past year.

More than 22.94 million tickets were purchased at stations across the region during the past 12 months – up from 22.09 million the year before.

## Busiest

Ticket sales at the region's 35 stations increased by almost four per cent, with just four stations seeing numbers decline – Kidderminster, Lye, The Hawthorns and Blakedown.

Wolverhampton remained the busiest station in the Black Country and Staffordshire, with more than 4.9 million passengers over the past year.

It meant there was a 3.67 per cent increase in ticket sales at the station – which is operated by Virgin Trains.

The region's quietest station, Bloxwich, saw 49,672 commuters – up from 43,728 in 2015-16.

Cannock station, on the soon to be electrified Chase Line, was used by 220,290 passengers in 2015-16 but a total of 233,172 visited the station over the past year.

Stourbridge Junction was revealed to be the Dudley borough's busiest station, seeing a 2.28 per cent increase in ticket sales to 1.47 million. Sandwell's busiest station, Rowley Regis, was used by 1.06 million passengers over the past year, compared with 1.02 million the year before.

Ticket sales at Walsall also increased, with 1.47



The Queen at New Street



Chase Line upgrade work



Ticket sales up nearly 4pc

million using the station – a 4.51 per cent increase. Stafford was the second busiest station across the region, with 2,329,490 ticket sales.

Francis Thomas, spokesman for train operator London Midland, which ran services in the region until Sunday when West Midlands Trains took over the franchise, said: "One of the great successes of London Midland over the last few years has been the phenomenal growth of people wanting to travel by train."



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## Slimmers enjoy first birthday party



The Great Wyrley Self Help Slimmers celebrate their achievements at the first year anniversary tea party

A SLIMMING group took the afternoon off to enjoy a tea party for its first birthday.

Great Wyrley Self Help Slimmers is a non-profit making group which meets every Monday evening at Harrison's Social Club, in Wharwell Lane. Members sampled a selection of sandwiches and cakes.

Over the year the slimmers have lost a combined 59 stones and raised more than £1,100 for local charities and groups. Presentations were made to the most successful

members, with Slimmer of the Year Audrey Fellows losing 43lb, while Robert Ricketts, Julie Shaw, and Janet Sheridan shed 28.5, 20.5 and 19.5lb respectively and received sashes.

Joint founder Marie Parsons said the group had a fantastic first year because it was not just about losing weight but supporting each other and the community. For more information contact Marie on 07825 612949 or drop in to Harrison's Social Club between 6 and 7pm on Mondays.

## Surgeon inquiry widened

**THE Government has announced further plans for its independent inquiry into disgraced West Midlands breast surgeon Ian Paterson.**

Chaired by the Rt Rev Graham James, Bishop of Norwich, it will look at broader lessons that can be learned about private healthcare.

It will examine the circumstances and practices surrounding Paterson's malpractice and look at how this can improve care locally and the independ-

ent healthcare sector across the country to ensure private patients have the safeguards they expect.

Paterson, a consultant breast surgeon who was employed by the Heart of England NHS Foundation Trust, intentionally wounded his patients by exaggerating or inventing cancer risks and claimed payments for more expensive procedures.

Among his victims were Frances Perks, from Burntwood, and Leanne Joseph from Cheslyn Hay.

Paterson, who had practising privi-

leges in the independent sector at both Spire Parkway and Spire Little Aston in Birmingham, was found guilty of 17 counts of wounding patients with intent in April and jailed for 20 years.

The announcement follows a pledge by Health Secretary Jeremy Hunt to hold a 'comprehensive and focused inquiry' into Paterson's wrongdoing. Following this, and Health Minister Philip Dunne's meeting with victims and their families, the initial scope of the investigation has been widened in recognition of their feedback.



# Welcome

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# JCB's plants set for record high in 2018

## Business site fully occupied



From left, Kim and Nigel Bailey of Cannock Caravans, who are tenants on Watling Street Business Park, Gemma Butler, asset manager from St Modwen, and Jonathan Green, director for St Modwen

PROPERTY group St Modwen has successfully attracted a number of new tenants at its Watling Street Business Park near Cannock, which is now fully occupied.

The latest lettings at the 160,000 sq ft business park, midway between Brownhills and Cannock, are expected to bring more than 20 additional jobs to the area.

New and existing tenants include logistics firm Pro Freight Solutions; civil engineering contractors CPC Civils; Joyce & Reddington, a bespoke architectural and joinery manufacturer, and Cannock Caravan Accessories which, with support from St Modwen, has recently

expanded into neighbouring units. Between them, they have taken more than 86,000 sq ft of space.

Jonathan Green, director of asset management at St Modwen, said: "With its robust transport links and range of units available, Watling Street has always received strong occupier interest."

"We proactively manage relations with existing and new occupiers to ensure their needs are met and to enable their businesses to grow at our developments."

Watling Street Business Park comprises more than 167,000 sq ft of industrial, warehousing and open storage accommodation off the A5.

JCB expects its production plants to build a record 70,000 machines globally during 2018, according to a briefing given to the Confederation of British Metalforming (CBM).

Members of the association, which has its headquarters in West Bromwich, also heard that the company's raw materials budget had soared since sterling slumped after the EU referendum in June 2016.

JCB employs more than 6,000 people in the UK, most of them in Staffordshire including 400 at its cab factory at Rugeley and 200 at its Power Products business in Stafford.

JCB's group purchase manager Chris Bell told CBM members that the price of hot-rolled steel was up 57 per cent, rubber now cost 83 per cent more, and the price of copper had risen 20 per cent.

"It really has hit our costs and is a big challenge. The upside is that products exported from the UK are more competitive."

"However, sterling's devaluation has also made it easier for JCB to source supplies and components competitively in the UK."

"At the moment, the UK supplier base appears to be operating at capacity. One of the barriers to increasing capacity is the non-availability of some skilled labour, for example welders," Mr Bell added.

The CBM visit was arranged to enlighten members about opportunities to enter JCB's supply chains.

CBM chief executive Geraldine Bolton said: "Everything we do is driven by our members, and given the long-term supply contracts which JCB offers, it was vital that we all understood more about its requirements, and its strategic thinking. This event was arranged to coincide with our celebrations to mark the centenary of the formation of our forging industry trade association which, although it no longer exists, was a forerunner of the CBM."

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## FOCUS ON BURNTWOOD

# All lit up as company takes a shine to float



Danielle Goffe-Wood of Cameron Homes and Richard Poynton of Burntwood Rotary Club as Santa

**A BURNTWOOD Christmas float which raises money for charity each year has been boosted by sponsorship from a local building firm.**

Cameron Homes, based in Chase-town, has provided backing for the Burntwood Rotary Club initiative.

The club drives the vehicle around the town each year, giving children the chance to meet Santa and collect-

ing money at the same time for good causes.

"We were happy to hand over a £200 cheque to sponsor the Christmas float as we know it is a popular annual attraction in Burntwood," Danielle Goffe-Wood of Cameron Homes said.

Tony Spencer of Burntwood Rotary Club said: "We are very grateful to Cameron for their generous donation which has enabled us to ensure the Santa float is brightly lit and newly

decorated. The vehicle will again bring joy and happiness to many children and parents during the festive period.

"The programme this year is packed with tours of housing estates, supermarkets, festival events and our own Tree of Light switch-on at Swan Island."

"And importantly we use these opportunities to collect funds for worthwhile charities in the Burntwood area," Mr Spencer added.

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Cathedral's very warm welcome



Adrian Dorber, Dean of Lichfield Cathedral – 'our carol services are perennial favourites'

LICHFIELD Cathedral has put together a varied Christmas line-up of worship, prayer and some special events for the whole family. People of all ages are invited to attend the services and concerts where they can reflect and pray in the magnificent surroundings of the cathedral.

Adrian Dorber, Dean of Lichfield Cathedral, said: "We have a wonderful Christmas programme of services and events lined up this year which we're very excited about, and we look forward as always to extending a very warm welcome to visitors of all ages. Our carol services are perennial favourites, and we hope to see both new and familiar faces paying us a visit over the festive period."

To find out more, visit [www.lichfield-cathedral.org](http://www.lichfield-cathedral.org)

Any businesses interested in taking part in the Christmas Tree Festival, which runs until Wednesday, January 3, should call Oliver Birch on 01543 622460 or email [oliver.birch@lichfield-cathedral.org](mailto:oliver.birch@lichfield-cathedral.org)

# Police offer tips in their #saferxmas campaign

A CAMPAIGN run by Staffordshire Police aims to keep families and their possessions safe during the Christmas period.

Officers are focusing on providing advice on how children can avoid unwanted attention online, crime prevention tips, and reminders about 'making the right decisions that do not endanger you and others around you'.

By David Banner

Cannock-based Supt Carl Ratcliffe, head of prevention and early intervention, said: "This campaign has been months in the planning, and I'm really excited to see it finally be implemented."

"Educating parents is a really important priority for the force, as often a few simple steps can prevent children being exposed to unwanted attention online."

"I would encourage anyone who has children or cares for them to engage with the campaign and make sure you have the skills to protect them online."

"Christmas can be a very busy time for the police, and the more we can do to educate people on how to protect themselves, their family and their possessions, then

hopefully we will see fewer victims of crime."

"Unfortunately Christmas also sees a lot of people making poor decisions, fuelled by alcohol and drugs. Offences like violence and driving under the influence become more common, and one bad decision can ruin Christmas for you and your family. Let's make Christmas a joyous affair and not one that changes lives for the worst."

All of the force's advice will be available at [www.staffordshire.police.uk/christmas](http://www.staffordshire.police.uk/christmas)

Throughout the campaign, officers will be using social media. To join in the conversation use the hashtag #saferxmas

# ENTERTAINMENT

## CANNOCK CHASE

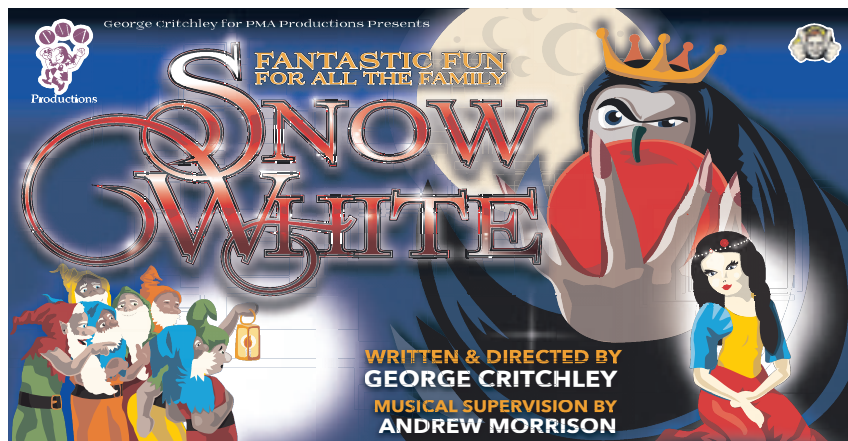
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DECEMBER

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# Former Wolves player is cleared over fraud claims

**FORMER Wolves player Michael McIndoe has been cleared over allegations of fraud, New Scotland Yard has confirmed.**

The 38-year-old was investigated after claims were made that he had conned fellow footballers out of millions of pounds.

It was alleged that five Wolves players had lost an estimated £2.6m, with one group from the club said to have handed over more than a million pounds in one payment in 2011.

Among those who were in the headlines in January this year in connection with the matter was Hednesford Town player David McDermott, who said he had lost £140,000.

McDermott, who made his debut for Walsall at 16, said he and other young footballers from clubs across the country were first introduced to the Scottish midfielder in around 2010.

## Investigation

The Stourbridge-born midfielder, who at the time was playing for York City after a spell at Kidderminster Harriers in the Conference, became ill with a stress-related stomach illness, and his playing days looked to be over. He had loan spells at Halesowen Town and turned out for Rushall Olympic, but had been working outside of football before a spell at Redditch United led to him being signed by the Pitmen.

Last week, a spokesman for New Scotland Yard said: "In February 2015 an allegation of fraud was made to Westminster CID. Following an initial investigation, the matter was deemed a civil matter and the victim informed."

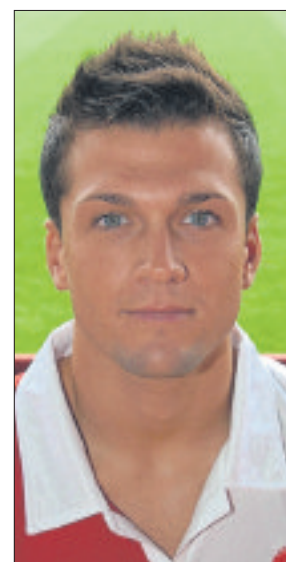
"Further allegations were subsequently reported to police via Action Fraud. These were assessed and an



**Michael McIndoe – no further action**

investigation was launched by officers from the Falcon unit."

McIndoe was interviewed under caution in connection with the investigation on January 10 this year, the spokesman said, adding: "No further action will be taken. The investigation is closed." McIndoe, who played for Wolves from 2006 to 2007, tweeted: "Just been officially informed by Scotland Yard that I have been completely cleared of the allegation of fraud made against me and the CPS are taking no



**David McDermott – in the headlines**

further action." He was declared bankrupt in 2014, owing 17 men almost £3.5 million.

McIndoe has always denied any wrongdoing and once told a bankruptcy court he was a professional gambler. He has previously said: "I have never run any kind of investment scheme or Ponzi scheme."

Former Wolves and Villa striker Robbie Keane and current Villa forward Gabby Agbonlahor were among footballers alleged to have lost out.

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# The ricket

21

The Chronicle Thursday, December 14, 2017

**OH WHAT A NIGHT!  
IT'S JERSEY BOYS  
INSIDE**



**MUSIC + THEATRE + PUZZLES + TV GUIDE**

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# They're just too good to be true!

**O**h what a night! The internationally acclaimed stage sensation, Jersey Boys, is working its way back to Birmingham with a festive run at the city's New Alexandra Theatre.

The hit musical has won 57 major awards, including the Olivier Award for Best New Musical, and will be on from tomorrow until January 6.

Jersey Boys tells the true life story of four boys from the wrong side of the tracks who wrote their own songs, invented their own unique sound, and sold 100 million records worldwide as Frankie Valli and the Four Seasons.

Featuring hit after legendary hit including Beggin', December 1963 (Oh What A Night), Can't Take My Eyes Off You, Walk Like A Man, Bye Bye Baby, Big Girls Don't Cry and many more, Jersey Boys is a story full of heart, humour and sheer musical razzmatazz.

The show features a starry cast of West End actors, including Simon Bailey who stars as Tommy DeVito. Simon has carved out an impressive career after starring in Bat Boy, Marry Me A Little, I Can't Sing! The X-Factor Musical, Phantom of the Opera, Parade, Passion, Les Miserables and Joseph.

He was present when Jersey Boys began its nine-year run in London and went to the first night. "I didn't know about the music at first. But I went to the first night and within four minutes I knew I had to do it. I've bided my time until the part became available.

"To be honest with you, the show is so well written and so slick. The story is fast-paced and intelligently written. Essentially, you get the same story – the story of Frankie Valli and the Four Seasons – told by four different people. Seeing everyone's individual take on what happened is great because everyone gets to tell their side of the story. The way that the music comes in is brilliant. It's so fast-paced. You kind of forget you're watching something. It's seamless and faultless."

## IDENTIFY

Simon loves shows that give fans the maximum value for money.

"You are fully entertained for two-and-a-half hours. You just want to watch it again and again and again.

"I saw it 8 or 10 times and I became a fan of the show before I got to be in it."

The present tour features Michael Watson as Frankie Valli, Simon as Tommy De Vito, Declan Egan as Bob Gaudio and Lewis Griffiths as Nick Massi. All four have previously performed their roles in Jersey Boys to great acclaim: Michael and Simon in the West End, Declan in the West End and Australia, and Lewis in the first UK and Ireland tour.

Simon was delighted to be cast as De Vito. "Tommy is great. The thing I loved about it is that you need to find something you can identify with. I always identified with his desire to succeed. While I may not agree with him methods – but they make him fun to play – I respect and admire his desire to succeed. If you are growing up where they grew up, you either went into the army and die, go into the mob and die or be a star and don't die. Being in a band got him out of the wrong place. He did what he had to do. He discovered Frankie and it all came together. Tommy was the catalyst."

Simon spends most of his time in London's West End but was thrilled to be given a chance to get back on the road.

"This is my third tour. I did the Phantom of the Opera 25th anniversary back in 2012 and I did something at the start of my career. I've always enjoyed travel, internationally and nationally, so being on the road is great. Leaving London for a while is no bad thing, it refreshes you. I love the energy the audiences bring. We are in for a couple of weeks at a time and the audiences want to enjoy it."

Simon says the days of getting great shows in the West End and second tier shows in the provinces are long

Walk like a man – Jersey Boys will appear at the New Alex



*To be honest, the show is so well written and so slick*

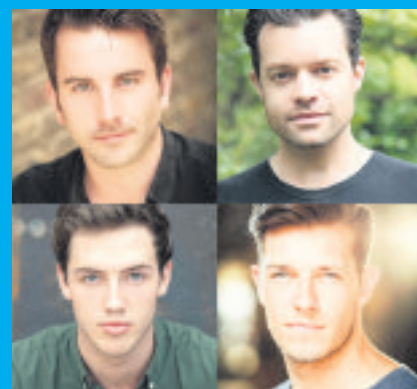
gone. These days, there's no difference in quality. Fans at Birmingham can look forward to a first class show.

"You get the great shows in the provinces these days. That dividing line between the West End and the rest of the UK is obsolete.

"I grew up going to the West End. I was very, very lucky. My parents were very much into the theatre. I was one of the lucky ones who went to see West End theatre from a very early age. One of the first things I ever saw was Joseph at the palladium with Jason Donovan. I will never forget the feeling of being in the theatre and it was so big and wonderful and magical. I was watching this whole brand new life and story on stage. It kind of blew my mind. I did a show at the Palladium a couple of years ago called I Can't Sing. I remember walking out on stage and seeing the seat I was sat in all those years before. It made me feel like a very lucky human being. Now I have the ability to transport other people and that's a real privilege."

ANDY RICHARDSON

● For more entertainment news and reviews see The Ticket in your Express & Star every Friday.





Fairy Godmother Beverley Knight



## Beverley leads all-star cast in panto spectacular

WOLVERHAMPTON soul diva Beverley Knight will make her pantomime debut in Cinderella, this year's Birmingham Hippodrome spectacular.

Beverley will be starring alongside Strictly Come Dancing 2016 finalist Danny Mac, Brum panto favourite Matt Slack, pop singer and Dancing On Ice star Suzanne Shaw, and veteran comedy duo The Grumbleweeds. The show will also feature the most faaabulous Ugly Sisters, Ceri Dupree and Phil Randall.

Cinderella promises all the ingredients of the perfect Hippodrome panto – great cast, laugh-out-loud comedy, lots of pop music, dazzling special effects and extravagant costumes. Cinderella runs from Tuesday until January 28.

Other festive shows for the family include 101 Dalmations, Debbie Issit's version of the story that became a Disney classic, with actors and amazing puppets at Birmingham Rep until January 13.

Wolverhampton's panto at the Grand stars singer Gareth Gates with Lisa Riley and the Black Country's own Doreen Tipton in Jack And The Beanstalk, at the Lichfield Street theatre until January 14.

Arena Birmingham is putting on a big event panto in the city centre mega-venue from December 20 to Christmas Eve with Peter Pan, starring Martin Kemp (of EastEnders and Spandau Ballet) as Captain Hook and Bradley Walsh (TV host and new Doctor Who companion) as Mr Smee. With a cast of 100 performers it is described as 'the world's biggest panto'.

## Festive music from pop to carols



There's a feast of festive music ahead this weekend and in the run up to Christmas, from pop to folk, classical to carols.

Slade get things rocking with Dave Hill and Don Powell in a sold out gig at Bilston's Robin 2 tomorrow night (Friday), whilst Midlands Hospital Choir Sing Noel in two concerts at Birmingham Town Hall tomorrow, 2.15 and 7pm.

Brum rocker Roy Wood brings his special Rockmas concert to the Symphony Hall on Saturday featuring special guest Paul Young. Expect to hear I wish It

Could Be Christmas Everyday. Also on Saturday 'the Barnsley Nightingale', folk singer-songwriter Kate Rusby, brings her Christmas show to Birmingham Town Hall. Meanwhile, '70s hits, including Rivers of Babylon, will be revived at the Robin 2 by Boney M featuring original member Maizie Williams, who grew up in Birmingham.

Celebrated Welsh singer Katherine Jenkins, pictured, performs her festive concert at the Symphony Hall on Sunday evening. There is a Christmas Carol Singalong led by Jonathan Cohen and featuring West End star Louise Dearman at Symphony Hall on

Monday at 2.30pm and then in the evening the same venue host Classic Carols with the City of Birmingham Choir and readings from actor and TV presenter Sir Tony Robison.

On Monday night Birmingham Town Hall hosts Yuletide laughs and music when the Rainer Hersch Orchestra present Christmas No1 Pop Singalong.

For three consecutive nights, Tuesday to Thursday at Symphony Hall, A Choral Christmas features City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra and Choruses in concerts hosted by Ore Oduba.

## Singer has home city concert date

ACCLAIMED Wolverhampton singer-songwriter Dan Whitehouse has a homecoming concert at Newhampton Arts Centre in Dunkley Street on Sunday. Dan, who released his fourth album *That's Where I Belong* last year, will be performing with a band and is supported by The Little Unsaid and Matt Sayers. The seated concert starts at 7.30pm and tickets cost £10. The 38-year-old musician will return in January as part of the city's Literary Festival to give a songwriting workshop.



## Time to take trip down the digital rabbit hole

A PROFESSIONAL cast is joined by an ensemble of 26 students from Birmingham Ormiston Academy for a production of Lewis Carroll's *Alice In Wonderland* at Birmingham's Old Rep theatre, next to Grand Central. Grace Dean takes on the title role of Alice with Alec Fellows-Bennett as the Mad Hatter in a show that will feature morning and afternoon performances until December 30. Audiences can expect a puppet cat and a digital rabbit hole in this new adaptation of a classic. This will be the third Christmas production produced by Birmingham Ormiston Academy, the regional academy for digital, creative and performing arts. The creative team are led by Scott Le Crass who has directed both locally and nationally since graduating from the Birmingham Rep Foundry programme.

## Christmas Services in Cannock Churches



*You are warmly invited to attend wherever and whenever you can*

### Bethany Baptist Church, Chadsmoor

December 24th Christmas Eve 10.45am Christmas Carol Service

December 25th Christmas Day 10.30 am 'We celebrate His birth'

### Bourne Methodist Church, Heath Hayes

December 17th 5pm Candlelight Carol Service

December 24th Christmas Eve 11.15am Christmas Eve Holy Communion - to be held at Chase Terrace Methodist Church

December 25th Christmas Day 9.30am Christmas Day Celebration

### Cannock Salvation Army

December 17th 5pm Carol Service

December 24th Christmas Eve 5pm Carols by Candlelight

December 25th Christmas Day 10.30am God's Joy

### Chadsmoor Methodist Church

December 17th 10.30am Carol Service 6pm Carol Service

December 24th Christmas Eve 10.30am Morning Worship

7.15pm - Welcome Christmas

December 25th Christmas Day 10.30am Family Celebrations

December 31st New Year's Eve 11.15pm Watch night Service

### St Aidan's Church, West Chadsmoor

December 17th 4pm 9 Lessons and Carols.

December 24th Christmas Eve 11.30pm Christmas Eucharist.

### St Chad's Church, Chadsmoor

December 24th Christmas Eve 5pm Christingle with Nativity - dressing up opportunities!

December 24th Christmas Eve 11.30pm Midnight Communion

December 25th Christmas Day 9am

Said Service of Holy Communion

### St. Luke's, Cannock

December 17th 5.30pm Carol's by Candlelight

December 24th Christmas Eve 4pm Crib Service

11.30pm Midnight Communion

December 25th Christmas Day 9.30am Holy Communion

### St Mary's RC Church, Cannock

December 24th Christmas Eve 4pm Nativity Mass

6pm Carols 6.30pm First Mass of Christmas

December 25th Christmas Day 10am Mass of Christmas Day.

### St. Stephen's Methodist Church, Bideford Way

December 17th 10.30am - Communion Service

4pm Candlelit Carol Service

December 24th Christmas Eve 10.30am Public Worship

4pm - Christmas Eve Holy Communion

December 25th Christmas Day 10.30am Christmas Celebration

### St. Thomas', Huntington

December 17th 10.30am Carol Service

December 24th Christmas Eve 4pm Crib Service

December 25th Christmas Day 10am Christmas Celebration



CHOICE



Shirley Ballas

**Strictly Come Dancing - The Final (BBC1, 6.30pm)**  
Tess Daly and Claudia Winkleman host the live grand final, which sees the final three celebrity contestants and their partners taking to the stage in dances that will determine whether they claim the glitterball trophy. Shirley Ballas, Bruno Tonioli, Craig Revel Horwood and Darcey Bussell offer their comments and score the performances, but as always, their opinions are merely guidance – the decision as to who waltzes off with this year's title is down to the viewers' vote. As the winner is decided, the rest of the 2017 cast are expected to return for one final, celebratory group performance.

BBC1

**6.00** Breakfast. **10.00** Saturday Kitchen Live. **11.30** Nigel Slater's 12 Tastes of Christmas. (R) **12.00** Football Focus. **1.00** BBC News; Weather. **1.15** Sports Personality of the Year 2017 – The Contenders. (R) **2.15** Bargain Hunt. (R) **3.15** Escape to the Country. (R) **4.00** Final Score. **5.25** BBC News. **5.35** Regional Programme. **5.40** Pointless Celebrities. (R)  
**6.30** **Strictly Come Dancing – The Final.** Tess Daly and Claudia Winkleman host the live grand final, which sees the final three celebrity contestants and their partners taking to the stage in dances that will determine whether they claim the glitterball trophy. Shirley Ballas, Bruno Tonioli, Craig Revel Horwood and Darcey Bussell offer their comments and score the performances, but as always, their opinions are merely guidance – the decision as to who waltzes off with this year's title is down to the viewers' vote. As the winner is decided, the rest of the 2017 cast are expected to return for one final, celebratory group performance.  
**9.00** **Michael McIntyre's Big Show.** The comedian hosts another evening of entertainment, as Irish singer and One Direction graduate Niall Horan performs on stage. Also delighting the masses tonight is Michael's fellow funnyman Jason Manford, and actress, comedienne and accomplished prat-faller Miranda Hart risks offending her family and friends as she hands her phone over in Celebrity Send-to-All. Plus, an A&E doctor is tricked into believing the theatre is actually a grand hotel as the host stages another ambitious Unexpected Star stunt.  
**10.00** BBC News; Weather.  
**10.20** Match of the Day. Gary Lineker presents highlights of the latest Premier League matches, including Manchester City v Tottenham Hotspur.  
**11.45** **The NFL Show.** Mark Chapman is joined by former players Osi Umenyiora and Jason Bell to present highlights of Thursday night's game, plus a look at the major stories shaping the NFL world.  
**12.15** Film: Surviving Christmas. (2004)  
**1.40** Weather for the Week Ahead. **1.45** BBC News.

BBC2

**6.15** Holiday of My Lifetime with Len Goodman. (R) **7.00** Nature's Weirdest Events. (R) **7.30** Naomi's Nightmares of Nature. **8.00** Deadly 60. (R) **8.30** Show Me What You're Made Of: UK. **9.00** Saturday Mash-Up! **11.00** Penguins on a Plane: Great Animal Moves. (R) **12.00** Raymond Blanc: How to Cook Well. (R) **12.30** Tom Kerridge's Best Ever Dishes. (R) **1.00** Homes Under the Hammer. (R) **1.45** Coast. (R) **2.20** Garden Rescue. (R) **2.50** Mastermind. (R) **3.20** Film: Possessed. (1947) Psychological thriller, starring Joan Crawford. **5.05** Talking Pictures: Roger Moore.  
**6.05** **Film: Escape to Athena.** (1979) Second World War Allied PoWs incarcerated on a Greek island plan to defy the SS by breaking out of prison and pulling off an art robbery, with the help of their liberal-minded camp commandant. Action adventure, with Roger Moore, David Niven, Telly Savalas, Elliott Gould, Stefanie Powers and Claudia Cardinale.  
**8.00** **Attenborough's Life That Glows.** David Attenborough explores the world of bioluminescence, the often spectacular natural light produced by creatures including glow-worms, fireflies and plankton, using specially designed cameras, some fitted to a new generation of deep-sea submersibles and robots to record instances in the very deep ocean. The programme shows a millipede glowing on the forest floor in California, the mesmerising flashing light patterns of the synchronous firefly, the spooky glow of a rare dragon fish and luminous earth worms in France. (R)  
**9.00** **Feud: Bette and Joan.** New series. Drama exploring the rivalry between Bette Davis and Joan Crawford, beginning in 1962, as Joan considers a collaboration. Starring Jessica Lange and Susan Sarandon.  
**9.55** **Feud: Bette and Joan.** Filming begins on What Ever Happened to Baby Jane?, and despite still being at odds, Bette and Joan unite as they campaign to get rid of an attractive female co-star.  
**10.45** QI XL.  
**11.30** Jeff Lynne's ELO – Wembley or Bust.  
**12.45** Film: Shadow of the Vampire. (2000) **2.10** This Is BBC Two.

ITV

**6.00** CITV: Sooty. **6.10** Bottom Knocker Street. (R) **6.20** Bottom Knocker Street. (R) **6.35** Dino Dan: Trek's Adventures. (R) **7.00** Mission Emplayable. (R) **7.05** Oddbods. (R) **7.10** Ultimate Spider-Man: Web Warriors. **7.30** Scrambled!: Scrambled! **7.35** Scrambled!: The Tom and Jerry Show. (R) **7.50** Scrambled!: Fangbone. (R) **8.10** Scrambled!: The Powerpuff Girls. (R) **8.30** Scrambled!: Thunderbirds Are Go. **9.10** Scrambled!: Wishart. (R) **9.25** ITV News. **9.30** Saturday Morning with James Martin. **11.25** Gino's Italian Coastal Escape. (R) **11.50** Countrywise. (R) **12.20** Thunderbirds Are Go. (R) **12.45** ITV News; Weather. **12.55** Endeavour. (R) **2.55** Film: The Flintstones in Viva Rock Vegas. (2000) Family comedy prequel, starring Mark Addy. **4.35** The Chase. (R) **5.35** Paul O'Grady: For the Love of Dogs. (R)  
**6.05** **Regional Programme;** Weather.  
**6.15** **ITV News;** Weather.  
**6.30** **Film: The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey.** (2012) Unassuming hobbit Bilbo Baggins is pulled out of his comfortable life when Gandalf the wizard volunteers him for a dangerous quest. He joins a party of dwarves who are on a mission to reclaim their lost homeland, which has been taken over by a dragon. When the group journeys into the Misty Mountains, Bilbo becomes separated from the dwarves and falls into a cave, where he finds himself confronted by Gollum and forced to play a riddle game. It is set in Middle-earth 60 years before the events of The Lord of the Rings and is the first part of Peter Jackson's fantasy adventure trilogy based on JRR Tolkien's novel, starring Martin Freeman, Ian McKellen, Richard Armitage, James Nesbitt, Ken Stott, Cate Blanchett, Ian Holm and Christopher Lee.  
**9.45** **ITV News;** Weather.  
**10.00** **Film: The Hangover.** (2009) Three men on a stag weekend in Las Vegas wake up to find they have lost the groom and cannot remember the night before. Comedy, with Bradley Cooper.  
**11.55** **Tonight at the London Palladium.** Bradley Walsh welcomes ABC, Nathan Sykes, the West End cast of Guys and Dolls, singer Gregory Porter and classical guitarist Milos to the world-famous stage. (R)  
**12.45** Jackpot247. **3.00** The Hungry Sailors. (R) **3.50** ITV Nightscreen.

CHANNEL 4

**6.55** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **7.20** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **7.45** Frasier. (R) **8.15** Frasier. (R) **8.40** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **9.05** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **9.35** The Simpsons. (R) **10.05** The Simpsons. (R) **10.35** The Simpsons. (R) **11.05** Film: Holiday in Handcuffs. (2007) **12.50** Come Dine with Me Christmas. (R) **1.55** Come Dine with Me Christmas. (R) **2.25** Come Dine with Me Christmas. (R) **2.55** Come Dine with Me Christmas. (R) **3.30** Grand Designs. (R) **4.30** Best Laid Plans. **5.35** Channel 4 News.  
**6.00** **Word of the Year.** Susie Dent is joined by a selection of celebrity guests to reveal which prominent term has been picked by Oxford Dictionaries to become the "Word of the Year" for 2017. The usual mix of inventive insults, fashionable portmanteaus and unusual descriptions have formed the shortlist this year, taking in everything from Kim Jong Un's unexpected use of the word "dotard" to describe Donald Trump, to an explosion in the use of the word "snowflake" to describe people with an inflated sense of their uniqueness. Joining Susie to pick through this year's crop of linguistic treasures are Jo Brand, Sara Pascoe, Nish Kumar, Aisling Bea, Rick Edwards and Jamie Laing.  
**7.00** **Guy Martin vs the Robot Car.** The presenter explores the world of automated self-driving vehicles, attempting to build one of his own and taking on a computer-controlled car in a race. (R)  
**8.00** **The World's Most Expensive Presents.** Cameras follow craftsmen and women producing lavish gifts with price tags to match, including a 24-carat gold-plated bike worth £250,000. (R)  
**9.00** **Film: Pitch Perfect.** (2012) Comedy, starring Anna Kendrick, Rebel Wilson and Elizabeth Banks.  
**11.10** **Film: The Inbetweeners Movie.** (2011) Awkward teenagers Simon, Will, Jay and Neil head to Greece for a wild holiday – but things do not go to plan. Comedy, with Joe Thomas, Simon Bird, James Buckley and Blake Harrison.  
**1.00** **Film:** Tomorrow, When the War Began. (2010) **2.40** The Last Leg. (R) **3.35** Hollyoaks. **5.40** Extreme Cake Makers. (R)

CHANNEL 5

**6.00** Milkshake! **9.50** The Gadget Show. (R) **10.45** Film: Nativity 3: Dude, Where's My Donkey?!. (2014) **12.55** Film: One Christmas Eve. (2014) Family comedy, starring Anne Heche. **2.40** Film: Love Always, Santa. (2016) **4.25** Film: Mariah Carey's A Christmas Melody. (2015) **5.25** 5 News Update. **5.30** Film: Mariah Carey's A Christmas Melody. (2015) Concluded.  
**6.05** **Sinkholes: Buried Underground.** Documentary examining the underlying forces behind sinkholes, which can swallow streets, rip up motorways and even drag unfortunate bystanders to their deaths. (R)  
**7.00** **Sinkholes: Sucked Under.** Geologist Tom Backhouse investigates sinkholes caused by collapsed mine shafts, including one in Gosforth that opened up in front of a flat and led down to an abandoned mine. (R)  
**8.00** **Sinkholes: Sucked to Death.** Documentary examining the underlying forces behind sinkholes, which can swallow streets, rip up motorways and even drag unfortunate bystanders to their deaths. Last in the series. (R)  
**8.55** 5 News Weekend.  
**9.00** **Football on 5: The Championship.** Colin Murray introduces highlights from the weekend's games, including Cardiff City v Hull City and Sunderland v Fulham.  
**10.00** **Football on 5: Goal Rush.** Colin Murray introduces all the goals from the weekend's games in Leagues One and Two, including Doncaster Rovers v Oldham Athletic and Exeter City v Stevenage.  
**10.30** **NCIS: New Orleans.** Pride investigates a murder on board a deep-sea oil rig, but his placed in peril when the team discovers a gas leak on-site is on the verge of causing a catastrophic explosion.  
**11.20** **NCIS: New Orleans.** Pride faces a conflict of interests when a hacker collective led by one of his old contacts is implicated in the theft of thousands of classified government files.  
**12.15** SuperCasino. **3.10** Harrogate: A Yorkshire Christmas. (R) **4.50** House Doctor. (R) **5.15** Wildlife SOS. (R) **5.40** Chinese Food in Minutes. (R) **5.55** Access. (R)

DIGITAL

**BBC Four**  
**7.00** All Aboard! The Sleigh Ride **9.00** Witnesses: A Frozen Death **10.55** The Vietnam War **11.50** Rich Hall's You Can Go to Hell, I'm Going to Texas **1.20** Natural World **2.20** Flamenco: Gypsy Soul **3.20** Close  
**ITV2**  
**11.25** Take Me Out Celebrity Special **12.30** I'm a Celebrity Get Me Out of Here! Coming Out **1.35** Mr Bean **2.45** Film: Mr Bean's Holiday (2007) **3.45** FYI Daily (2007) **4.35** Film: Yogi Bear (2010) **5.35** FYI Daily **5.40** Film: Yogi Bear (2010) **6.10** Film: Liar Liar (1997) **7.10** FYI Daily **7.15** Film: Liar Liar (1997) **7.55** Film: The Fast and the Furious: Tokyo Drift (2006) **8.55** FYI Daily **9.00** Film: The Fast and the Furious: Tokyo Drift (2006) **10.00** Celebrity Juice Christmas Special **11.00** Family Guy **12.30** American Dad! **1.25** The Cleveland Show **1.55** Celebrity Juice Christmas Special **2.45** Totally Bonkers Guinness World Records  
**ITV3**  
**12.40** Film: Columbo Goes to the Guillotine (1989) **2.40** The Casebook of Sherlock Holmes **5.00** Film: Mamma Mia! (2008) **6.05** FYI Daily **6.10** Film: Mamma Mia! (2008) **7.10** Agatha Christie's Marple **9.00** Grantchester **11.10** Hattie **12.55** Film: Up Pompeii (1971) **2.00** FYI Daily  
**ITV4**  
**11.10** Film: The Last Sunset (1961) **12.10** FYI Daily **12.15** Film: The Last Sunset (1961) **1.30** FYI Racing Live from Cheltenham: Coverage from Cheltenham and Doncaster. **4.00** Storage Wars: Texas **5.00** Film: Paranoia (2013) **6.00** FYI Daily **6.05** Film: Paranoia (2013) **7.15** Film: Bill & Ted's Excellent Adventure (1989) **8.20** FYI Daily **8.25** Film: Bill & Ted's Excellent Adventure (1989) **9.00** Film: Navy Seals (1990) **10.05** FYI Daily **10.10** Film: Navy Seals (1990) **11.20** Film: Universal Soldier: Day of Reckoning (2012) **12.00** FYI Daily  
**E4**  
**11.45** Film: A Turtle's Tale: Sammy's Adventures (2010) **1.30** The Goldbergs **4.00** The Big Bang Theory **9.00** Film: The Hunger Games (2012) **11.50** Gogglebox **2.00** The Inbetweeners **3.30** Rude Tube **4.25** Rude(ish) Tube  
**Film4**  
**11.00** Judy Moody and the Not Bummer Summer (2011) **1.00** Fast Girls (2012) **2.45** Volcano (1997) **4.50** The Return of the Musketeers (1989) **8.55** X-Men (2000) **9.00** Men in Black (1997) **10.55** The Purge: Anarchy (2014)

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Thriller Live

8 years in the West End, and the longest running show in the Lyric Theatre's 125-year history, Thriller Live celebrates the undisputed king of pop. In a career spanning 40 years, Michael Jackson has sold an unparalleled 750 million records worldwide with the Thriller album still the world's best-selling recording of all time. Expect your favourite Jackson songs delivered by an exceptionally talented cast and live band, including the smash hits I Want You Back, Beat It, Billie Jean, and Thriller plus many more!

London Theatre Break

2 Days by Coach - Evening Show

Departing Thursday 1 Mar

from Cannock & Stafford

Price Includes...

- ✓ Return coach travel
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- ✓ Thriller Live theatre ticket (evening performance)
- ✓ Free time in London

2 Days by Coach only £99

★★★★★

"Quite literally thrilling" The Stage



Wicked

Based on Gregory Maguire's acclaimed 1995 novel, Wicked re-imagines the land of Oz first created by L. Frank Baum in 1900. This multi award-winning stage musical is directed by Joe Mantello with music and lyrics by Stephen Schwartz and a book by Winnie Holzman. In this fantastic production, blond and popular Glinda forms an unlikely friendship with strange and misunderstood green girl Elphaba when they meet as sorcery students at Shiz University. After meeting the Wonderful Wizard of Oz their lives take different paths. Their adventures have extraordinary and unforeseen consequences which culminate in very different destinies.

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CHOICE



**The Apprentice (BBC1, 9pm)**  
The two finalists take on their last challenge to win a coveted investment from Alan Sugar, with hand-picked teams of contestants from the series returning to aid them in their endeavours. They face a three-day challenge to create brands and adverts to pitch to a room full of experts - but a poor commercial and an uninspiring brand name do neither candidate any favours. Last in the series.

BBC1

**6.00** Breakfast. **7.35** Match of the Day. (R) **9.00** The Andrew Marr Show. **10.00** Fern Britton Meets Rev Rose Hudson-Wilkin. **11.00** Regional Programme. **12.15** Bargain Hunt. (R) **1.00** BBC News. Weather. **1.15** Mary Berry's Country House Secrets. (R) **2.15** Songs of Praise. **2.50** Film: Toy Story 2. (1999) Animated sequel, with the voice of Tom Hanks. **4.20** Blue Planet II. (R) **5.20** BBC News. **5.45** Countryfile. **6.45** Sports Personality of the Year 2017. Gary Lineker, Clara Balding and Gabby Logan present this year's ceremony live from the Echo Arena in Liverpool. Andy Murray was presented the prestigious main award in 2016, his third overall and second in successive years. However, he is not in contention this year after an injury-plagued campaign. The shortlist this time is world heavyweight boxing champion Anthony Joshua, a four-time Tour de France winner Chris Froome, Formula 1 world champion Lewis Hamilton, short-track speed skater Elise Christie, Tottenham Hotspur striker Harry Kane, British tennis number one Johanna Konta, world superbike champion Jonathan Rea, Paralympian sprinter Jonnie Peacock, track legend Mo Farah, breaststroke world champion Adam Peaty, England cricketer Anya Shrubsole and Olympic taekwondo medalist Bianca Walkden. The Team of the Year, Coach of the Year, Lifetime Achievement, Overseas Sports Personality of the Year, Young Sports Personality of the Year, Unsung Hero and Helen Rollason awards will also be handed out.

**9.00** The Apprentice. The two finalists take on their last challenge to win an investment from Alan Sugar, with contestants from the series returning to aid them in their endeavours. Last in the series.

**10.00** The Apprentice: You're Hired. Rhod Gilbert is joined by the winner, the runner-up and Lord Sugar himself, as the business tycoon reveals the reasons behind his final decision. Last in the series.

**11.00** BBC News. **11.20** Regional Programme. **11.30** Ronny Chieng: International Student. **11.55** Weather for the Week Ahead. **12.00** BBC News.

BBC2

**6.05** Coast. (R) **7.05** Gardeners' World. (R) **7.35** The Secret History of the British Garden. (R) **8.35** Countryfile. (R) **9.30** Saturday Kitchen Best Bites. **11.00** Nigel Slater's 12 Tastes of Christmas. (R) **11.30** My Life on a Plate. (R) **12.15** MOTD2 Extra. **1.00** Escape to the Country. **1.30** Live Equestrian: Olympia 2017. Coverage of the sixth day of the Olympia International Horse Show. **4.35** Ski Sunday. **5.20** Film: Nativity! (2009) Comedy, starring Martin Freeman.

**7.00** Life in Polar Bear Town with Gordon Buchanan. Wildlife cameraman Gordon Buchanan visits the community of Churchill, Manitoba, on the shores of Canada's Hudson Bay. For two months every year, the people of Churchill must share their town with huge packs of polar bears, which gather at the bay every autumn to wait for the sea ice to form, so they can begin their winter hunt. Gordon goes on patrol with the "bear cops" charged with ensuring the towns residents - and the bears themselves - stay safe, and meets the bin-men who must dodge bears every day as they deliver refuse to the dump. He also illustrates the dangers of living in the "polar bear capital of the world" as he interviews a young woman who was mauled by a bear, right in the middle of Churchill's main street. (R)

**8.00** James May's Toy Stories: The Motorcycle Diaries. The Top Gear presenter sets out to build a motorbike and sidecar entirely out of Meccano and complete a lap of the Isle of Man's TT circuit with passenger Oz Clarke. (R)

**9.00** The Alternativity. Documentary about the making of a contemporary performance inspired by the nativity story.

**10.00** DetectoClaris Christmas Special. **10.30** Match of the Day 2. Mark Chapman reviews the latest Premier League action.

**11.30** Insert Name Here. Katy Brand, Ed Gamble, Suzannah Lipscomb and Amol Rajan join captains Richard Osman and Josh Widdicombe to answer Sue Perkins' questions about famous people who share a name. (R)

**12.00** Talking Pictures: Roger Moore. (R) **1.00** Sign Zone: Question Time. (R) **2.00** Holby City. (R) **3.00** This Is BBC Two.

ITV

**6.00** CITV: Sooty. **6.10** Bottom Knocker Street. (R) **6.20** Bottom Knocker Street. (R) **6.35** Dino Dana. (R) **7.00** Mission Employable. (R) **7.05** Oddbods. (R) **7.10** Thunderbirds Are Go. (R) **7.30** Scrambled!: Scrambled! **7.35** Scrambled!: The Tom and Jerry Show. (R) **7.50** Scrambled!: Ben 10. **8.10** Scrambled!: Mr Bean: The Animated Series. (R) **8.30** Scrambled!: Tom and Jerry: Santa's Little Helpers. **9.00** Scrambled!: Wisthart. (R) **9.25** ITV News. **9.30** Best Walks with a View with Julia Bradbury. (R) **9.55** Countrywide Winter Wonderland. (R) **10.40** The Martin Lewis Money Show. (R) **11.10** Save Money: Good Food. (R) **11.40** How to Spend it Well at Christmas with Phillip Schofield. (R) **12.40** ITV News: Weather. **12.45** Film: Step Up. (2006) Romantic dance drama, with Channing Tatum and Jenna Dewan. **2.50** Midsomer Murders. (R) **4.45** Tipping Point. (R) **5.45** The Chase: Celebrity Special.

**6.45** The Chase: The Bloopers. Bradley Walsh presents a compilation of outtakes from the quiz show, featuring regular chasers the Governess, the Beast, the Vixen, the Sinnerman and the Dark Destroyer.

**7.40** Regional Programme: Weather. **7.50** ITV News: Weather. **8.00** Film: The Hobbit: The Desolation of Smaug. (2013) The party of dwarves and their hobbit ally continue the quest to reclaim their lost kingdom, journeying through the forest home of ancestral enemy the elves and finally facing the dragon that drove them from their home. Meanwhile, Gandalf the wizard investigates the rise of a mysterious dark power. Part two of Peter Jackson's fantasy adventure trilogy based on JRR Tolkien's novel, starring Martin Freeman, Ian McKellen, Richard Armitage and Orlando Bloom.

**11.05** ITV News: Weather. **11.25** Through the Christmas Keyhole. Keith Lemon hosts a Christmas special of the game show, as celebrity panelists Shayne Ward, Kelly Brook and Johnny Vegas are asked to identify the homes of the rich and famous. (R)

**12.15** Jackpot247. Viewers get the chance to participate in live interactive gaming from the comfort of their sofas, with a mix of roulette-wheel spins and lively chat from the presenting team.

**3.00** Tenable. Quiz, hosted by Warwick Davis. (R)

CHANNEL 4

**6.10** 3rd Rock from the Sun. (R) **6.35** 3rd Rock from the Sun. (R) **7.05** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **7.30** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **7.55** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **8.25** Frasier. (R) **8.55** Frasier. (R) **9.30** Sunday Brunch. **12.30** Paul Hollywood: A Baker's Life. (R) **1.00** Jamie's Ultimate Christmas. (R) **2.05** The Simpsons. (R) **2.35** The Simpsons. (R) **3.05** Film: Jingle All the Way. (1996) Comedy, starring Arnold Schwarzenegger. **4.50** Born Silly. **5.20** Channel 4 News. **5.50** Film: Miracle on 34th Street. (1994) Christmas family drama remake, with Richard Attenborough.

**8.00** Coastal Railways with Julie Walters. The actress travels from Cardigan Bay to Liverpool, visiting the heritage railway in Tywyn that was the inspiration for Thomas the Tank Engine and a community that is famous for knitting. She also paints a carriage in Boston Lodge, catches the famous Ffestiniog railway through Snowdonia, and visits Europe's fastest zip wire and largest pet cemetery. Last in the series.

**9.00** Inside Bentley: A Very British Motor Car. Documentary going behind the scenes at the car company's plant in northwest England, as work commences on a new range of 4x4s. This is the first time cameras have had access to the plant, which is currently undergoing millions in new investment. The programme features the local people and master craftsmen working on the factory floor as well as visiting the world's most exclusive car showroom in Mayfair and the secretive department where customers can obtain the latest upgrades to their bespoke vehicle.

**10.00** Film: Die Hard. (1988) A New York cop battles armed men who have taken over a Los Angeles skyscraper where his wife is working on Christmas Eve. Action thriller, starring Bruce Willis and Alan Rickman.

**12.35** Film: Mercury Rising. (1998) An FBI agent shields an autistic child from government assassins after the boy cracks a supposedly unbreakable top-secret code. Thriller, starring Bruce Willis and Alec Baldwin. **2.25** Film: Origins. (2014) Drama, starring Michael Pitt. **4.10** Location, Location, Location. Revisiting house-hunters in Kent and Edinburgh. (R) **5.05** Extreme Cake Makers. (R) **5.35** Countdown. (R)

CHANNEL 5

**6.00** Milkshake!: Little Princess. **6.15** Wanda and the Alien. (R) **6.20** Poppy Cat. (R) **6.35** Wisper. (R) **6.40** Milkshake! Monkey. (R) **6.45** Milkshake! Bopping About. (R) **6.50** Simon. (R) **6.55** Paw Patrol. (R) **7.10** Puffin Rock. **7.15** Milkshake! Bop Box. (R) **7.20** Fireman Sam. (R) **7.35** Olly the Little White Van. (R) **7.50** Blaze and the Monster Machines. (R) **8.15** Paw Patrol. (R) **8.30** Nella the Princess Knight. (R) **8.50** Maddy: Toyland Detective. (R) **9.00** Ben and Holly's Little Kingdom. (R) **9.10** Shimmer and Shine. (R) **9.30** Digby Dragon. (R) **9.45** Peppa Pig. (R) **9.55** Peppa Pig. (R) **10.00** Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles. (R) **10.35** Football on 5: The Championship. (R) **11.30** Football on 5: Goal Rush. (R) **12.00** Film: Season's Greetings. (2016) Festive comedy, starring Laura Bell Bundy. **1.50** Film: Twelve Ties of Christmas. (2013) Drama, starring Lindy Booth. **3.35** Film: Our First Christmas. (2008) Family drama, starring Julie Warner. **4.35** News Update. **4.40** Film: Our First Christmas. (2008) Concluded. **5.20** News Weekend. **5.25** Film: A Heavenly Christmas. (2016) Premiere. Festive romance, starring Kristin Davis.

**7.10** Film: Legally Blonde. (2001) A dizzy teenager enrolls at Harvard to try to prove to her ex-boyfriend that she is not stupid, but finds herself out of her depth. Comedy, with Reese Witherspoon and Luke Wilson.

**8.10** 5 News Update. **8.15** Film: Legally Blonde. (2001) Concluded.

**9.00** Agatha Christie's Crooked House. Adaptation of the mystery novel, starring Max Irons and Terence Stamp. The son of the assistant commissioner at Scotland Yard returns to London from Cairo following the end of the Second World War, only to discover his fiancée's grandfather has been murdered. He uses his father's connections to become involved in the investigation, only to discover nobody has an alibi but the woman he loves may have a motive. With Gillian Anderson and Glenn Close.

**11.00** Film: Sleepy Hollow. (1999) A sceptical 18th-century detective takes on a headless horseman who decapitates his victims. Tim Burton's gothic horror, with Johnny Depp.

**12.55** Criminals: Caught on Camera. (R) **1.15** SuperCasino. **3.10** My Crazy Christmas Obsession. (R)

DIGITAL

**BBC Four**  
**7.00** Only Connect **7.30** Great Continental Railway Journeys **8.00** Mrs Dickens' Family Christmas **9.00** The Mystery of Edwin Drood **11.00** The Real Star of Bethlehem: A Sky at Night Christmas Special **12.00** The Genius of Marie Curie - The Woman Who Lit Up the World **1.00** Roger Bannister: Everest on the Track **2.00** Timeshift: Mods, Rockers and Bank Holiday Mayhem

**ITV2**  
**11.50** Take Me Out Celebrity Special **12.55** Mr Bean **2.00** Film: Jack Frost (1998) **3.00** FYI Daily **3.05** Film: Jack Frost (1998) **4.05** Catchphrase Christmas Special **5.05** Film: Happy Feet (2006) **6.05** FYI Daily **6.10** Film: Happy Feet (2006) **7.15** Film: Gravity (2013) **8.15** FYI Daily **8.20** Film: Gravity (2013) **9.00** Film: The Holiday (2006) **10.00** FYI Daily **10.05** Film: The Holiday (2006) **11.45** Family Guy **1.40** American Dad!

**ITV3**  
**1.30** Film: Columbo: The Most Dangerous Match (1973) **3.10** Film: Columbo: Sex and the Married Detective (1989) **5.15** Film: Up Pompeii (1971) **6.20** FYI Daily **6.25** Film: Up Pompeii (1971) **6.55** Doc Martin **9.00** Tommy Cooper Forever **11.00** A Touch of Frost **1.05** The Knock

**ITV4**  
**11.25** Film: Bill & Ted's Excellent Adventure (1989) **12.30** FYI Daily **12.35** Film: Bill & Ted's Excellent Adventure (1989) **1.10** Film: Red River (1948) **2.10** FYI Daily **2.15** Film: Red River (1948) **3.55** Film: Bend of the River (1952) **4.55** FYI Daily **5.00** Film: Bend of the River (1952) **5.55** British Superbike Championship Review 2017 **7.55** River Monsters **9.00** Film: Species II (1998) **10.05** FYI Daily **10.10** Film: Species II (1998) **10.55** Film: Gangs of New York (2002) **11.55** FYI Daily **12.00** Film: Gangs of New York (2002)

**E4**  
**11.00** Made in Chelsea **12.00** Film: Catch That Kid (2004) **1.50** Rude(ish) Tube Shorts **2.00** The Goldbergs **3.30** The Big Bang Theory **8.00** Film: The Three Musketeers (2011) **10.10** Googlebox **12.20** The Inbetweeners **2.00** Rude Tube: All Things Weird and Wonderful **3.00** Googlebox **3.55** Hollyoaks

**Film4**  
**11.00** The Book of Life (2014) **1.00** First Daughter (2004) **3.20** The Train (1964) **6.05** Robin Hood (2010) **9.00** Thor (2011) **11.15** Love Is Strange (2014) **1.05** Mindscape (2013) **3.10** Close

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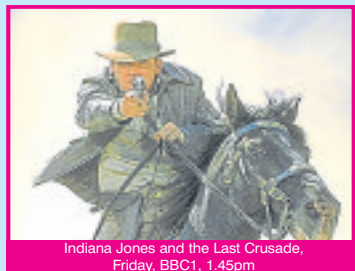


FILM CHOICES

**MONDAY**  
**Christmas Bucket List, Channel 5, 5.20pm**  
 Isobel plans a storybook Christmas with her boyfriend, including a snow-covered cottage and a carefully selected list of holiday traditions, but he goes Awol and a tempting new romance turns her life upside down. Comedy, starring Alicia Witt. (2016)

**TUESDAY**  
**A Prince for Christmas, Channel 5, 5.25pm**  
 In an effort to escape his upcoming arranged marriage, a European prince travels to America incognito over Christmas, where he meets a charming waitress. Festive romance, starring Viva Bianca and Kirk Barker. (2015)

**WEDNESDAY**  
**James and the Giant Peach, Channel 5, 12.25pm**  
 An unhappy orphan living with his cruel aunts discovers a gigantic peach growing in the garden. Venturing inside, he meets six friendly insects and together they embark on a magical journey. Animated and live-action fantasy, based on Roald Dahl's novel, starring Paul Terry, Joanna Lumley and Miriam Margolyes. (1996)



Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade, Friday, BBC1, 1.45pm

**THURSDAY**  
**Wallace & Gromit in The Curse of the Were-Rabbit, BBC1, 3.35pm**  
 Inventor Wallace and his canine sidekick Gromit have set up a pest-control service, and are called in to stop rabbits overrunning a garden show. However, the pair are overwhelmed when a destructive giant bunny arrives on the scene, while an interfering aristocrat contrives to make matters worse. Nick Park's Oscar-winning animated adventure, with the voices of Peter Sallis and Ralph Fiennes. (2005)

**FRIDAY**  
**Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade, BBC1, 1.45pm**  
 The intrepid archaeologist sets out to find his estranged father, who has gone missing while searching for the Holy Grail. Once reunited, the duo team up to finish the task and locate the sacred relic before the Nazis get their hands on it. Action adventure sequel, starring Harrison Ford. (1989)

# The Gentlemen are still in a League of their own

If there's one thing you're guaranteed when tuning into The League of Gentlemen it's trouble – and as Mark Gatiss, Steve Pemberton and Reece Shearsmith are back for three special editions this week, you can bet there'll be trouble aplenty in Royston Vasey.

If you haven't heard of the show, it focuses on some of the strangest characters ever to grace the small screen.

Take Edward and Tubbs, for example. They're a brother and sister living in "a local shop for local people" who hate strangers and bump them off at every opportunity, while Harvey and Val Denton are the relatives from Hell with a penchant for toads.

Then there's Barbara, the transsexual cab driver whose operation seems to have gone horribly wrong, and Pauline, a vindictive employment restart officer totally obsessed with pens.

But it's been a decade and a half since we last saw the boys all working together, in tandem with

their writing partner, Jeremy Dyson. They've decided to resurrect the town and its weird and wonderful inhabitants to celebrate the 20th anniversary of their first BBC show, a six-part radio broadcast entitled On the Town with the League of Gentlemen; its success led to the first TV series two years later.

"We are thrilled to bits to be returning to Royston Vasey in celebration of our 20 years at the BBC (with time off for bad behaviour)," say the boys. "We look forward to digging up the old characters - some of them literally - and seeing how life has treated them."

"It's been great fun to write these Specials, and we've saved money on the make-up budget by kindly growing ancient ourselves. Like the sign says: You'll Never Leave."

Gatiss, Shearsmith and Pemberton met while studying drama at Bretton Hall College in West Yorkshire, and struggled to make it as actors before teaming up with Gatiss' friend Dyson and devising a stage show inspired by

oddballs they had met, as well as their mutual love of classic British horror movies such as The Wicker Man, Don't Look Now and those made by Hammer.

After three TV series, a Christmas special, a film, stage show and live tours, the quartet decided to work on new projects. All three actors have worked constantly on a range of projects; Gatiss is perhaps best known for Doctor Who (he appears in this year's Christmas special) and Sherlock, while Pemberton and Shearsmith have appeared in a number of projects independently as well as together on Psychoville and Inside No 9.

Dyson has written books, been a script editor and co-created the West End hit Ghost Stories with Andy Nyman; a film version is heading our way soon.

Last year, Gatiss mentioned during an interview that perhaps when the League did come back together, they could do something with a Brexit theme, seeing as Britain had become a "local country for local people."



The League of Gentlemen, Monday, BBC2, 10pm

## BEST OF THE REST

**WEDNESDAY**  
**Judi Dench's Secret Woodland BBC1, 8pm**

The name tree-hugger is often used a derogatory term aimed at those who care for the countryside. But after tuning into this documentary, you may get the impression that Judi Dench would be proud to be called such a thing. For years, she has had a deep love, respect and affection for trees, and now has a secret woodland – or private arboretum, if you prefer – at her Surrey home. It's an area she created with a fellow enthusiast, her late husband Michael Williams, and one she now tends to with her close companion, wildlife enthusiast David Mills. Filmed over the course of a year, the programme offers an insight into the impact that the changing seasons have on the area, while the Oscar-winning star learns more about how trees help the environment.

**THURSDAY**  
**Joanna & Jennifer: Absolutely Changers BBC2, 9pm**  
 Champagne was always the tipple of choice for Absolutely

Fabulous characters Patsy Stone and Edina Monsoon – and it seems it's a similar story off-screen for actresses Joanna Lumley and Jennifer Saunders, who like nothing better than sharing a glass of bubbly. Now, they're about to learn more about their favourite drink as they head to the Champagne region of North Eastern France to discover how it's made. Along the way, they visit family run vineyards, and join the seasonal workers who are dealing with this year's grape harvest. But the Ab Fab stars also discover a few things they didn't know about each other as they share a few anecdotes and stories from their lives. And that's definitely worth raising a glass too.

**FRIDAY**  
**Celebrity 5 Go in Search of Santa Claus Channel 5, 8.30pm**  
 You can run but you can't hide from celebrity travelogues



Al Murray's Make Christmas Great Again, Friday, ITV, 9pm

these days. But while some have featured stars you might not expect to pop up on docusoaps – such as Julie Walters, Timothy West, Prunella Scales and Miriam Margolyes – there are others you've kind of come to expect to take part. Some of them feature in this 90-minute documentary. Actors Christopher Biggins and Sue Holderness, comedian Joe Pasquale, musician-turned-presenter Reverend Richard Coles and cook Rustie Lee are taking an epic trip into the Arctic Circle to explore Lapland, the official home of Santa Claus. They stay in traditional cabins and lodges, indulge in the 'delights' of saunas, river dipping and whipping with hot birch twigs while on the trail of the big man with the beard.

**Al Murray's Make Christmas Great Again**  
 ITV, 9pm  
 It's the last Friday before Christmas (known in some circles as Black or Mad Friday), which means that a lot of people will be heading to the pub to celebrate. However, if you don't fancy facing hordes of people with a little too much festive spirit, the good news is that Al Murray's Pub Landlord is back to host his own televised lock-in at The Reindeer's Head. Backed by his house band, The Remoans, he'll be leading festive sing-songs on numbers including You Can't Even Say Christmas Any More.

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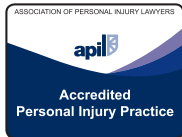
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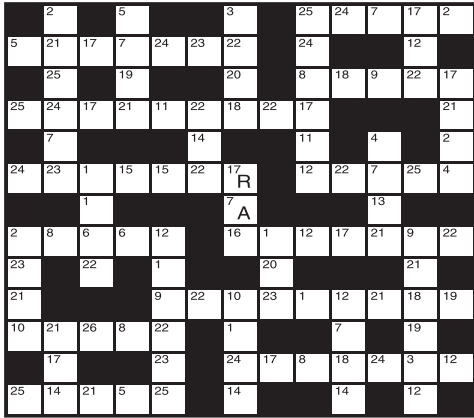


# BRAIN GYM

No.460

## Codeword

Each number in the grid represents a different letter of the alphabet and every letter of the alphabet is used. Use the given letter(s) to the right of the main grid to start you off.



LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION:

1	T	2	A	3	Q	4	Z	5	U	6	Y	7	V	8	W	9	P	10	G	11	F	12	X	13	I
14	K	15	B	16	J	17	S	18	N	19	R	20	H	21	E	22	D	23	C	24	O	25	L	26	M

1	14
2	15
3	16
4	17 R
5	18
6	19
7	20 A
8	21
9	22
10	23
11	24
12	25
13	26

## Double Crossword

Choose either quick or cryptic clues - both fit the same grid.

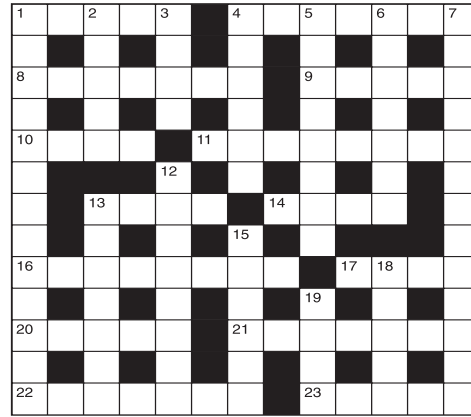
### Cryptic Clues:

#### Across

1. A game to settle the ashes? (5)
4. Film with a good finish (7)
8. In my view, a vegetable with very good stuffing (7)
9. Best substitute for shaving soap (5)
10. The last of the wine (4)
11. Keep for a lock (8)
13. It's bound to secure advance accommodation (4)
14. Thrash in the return game (4)
16. Snuggled into a new quilt, managed to remain undisturbed (8)
17. A race to make you sweat (4)
20. Keep out of sight after a number make complaints (5)
21. Stop and go after amber changes (7)
22. The girl looks different, having slimmed (7)
23. It's the herb season, we hear (5)

#### Down

1. New Liberal M.P. to put up a bill inside? Doubtful (13)
2. A weapon used daily by most people (5)
3. Deceiver stood up to use abusive language (4)
4. A number finish with an alternative seller (6)
5. Public deliveries (8)
6. Titanic destroyer (7)
7. It's said to be the best place to be (4,5,4)
12. A number on a search are winning (8)
13. Attitude taken by a navigator (7)
15. Passenger-ship has a slender look (6)
18. Is in good time but nearly loses a point (5)
19. Come up against an objection (4)



### Quick Clues:

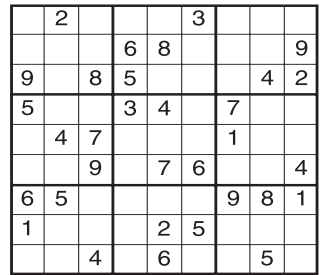
#### Across

1. Emulate (5)
4. Amuses (7)
8. Idiotic (7)
9. Shelf (5)
10. Inactive (4)
11. Deep (8)
13. A volcano (4)
14. Warmth (4)
16. Records (8)
17. Separate (4)
20. Angry (5)
21. Raise (7)
22. Inherent (7)
23. Clothe (5)

#### Down

1. Freezing (13)
2. Essential (5)
3. Booty (4)
4. Abandon (6)
5. Traduced (8)
6. Fortification (7)
7. Resolution (13)
12. Contrive (8)
13. Charm (7)
15. Disclose (6)
18. Lessen (5)
19. Despatch (4)

## Sudoku



Fill in the grid above so that every column, every row and each of the 3x3 boxes contains all the digits from 1 to 9.

### LAST WEEK'S SOLUTIONS >

1	4	3	6	2	7	8	9	5
5	2	6	4	9	8	3	7	1
7	9	8	1	3	5	4	6	2
4	8	2	5	6	1	9	3	7
6	5	9	2	7	3	1	8	4
3	7	1	9	8	4	2	5	6
8	6	7	3	1	2	5	4	9
9	1	4	8	5	7	2	3	6
2	3	5	7	4	9	6	1	8

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD SOLUTIONS:  
CRYPTIC - Across: 3 Billiards; 8 Uses; 9 Capricorn; 10 Prison; 11 Horse; 14 Charm; 15 Trim; 16 Amass; 18 Owed; 20 Track; 21 Solid; 24 Tender; 25 Frightful; 26 Coin; 27 Murderess.  
Down: 1 Suspicion; 2 Meditates; 4 Iran; 5 Largo; 6 Accost; 7 Dora; 9 Comma; 11 Hoard; 12 Errand boy; 13 Smoke ring; 17 Steel; 19 Dogged; 22 Inter; 23 Frau; 24 Tugs.  
QUICK - Across: 3 Promenade; 8 Etch; 9 Attribute; 10 Elapse; 11 Deal; 14 Those; 15 Each; 16 Realm; 18 Roam; 20 Enter; 21 Loyal; 24 Beacon; 25 Palatable; 26 Bass; 27 Personnel.  
Down: 1 Sedentary; 2 Octagonal; 4 Rite; 5 Merge; 6 Nublie; 7 Duty; 9 Aster; 11 Drawl; 12 Tactician; 13 Sharpness; 17 Melee; 19 Morass; 22 Again; 23 Vase; 24 Blue.

## Quiz

1. Which English king made the Homburg fashionable?
2. As which bird is the Holy Spirit usually depicted?
3. To which mountain range does Ben Nevis belong?
4. Which war was ended by the Treaty of Paris in 1856?
5. What is a monkey puzzle?

6. What was Walter Lantz's most famous flying cartoon creation?
7. Which singer-songwriter was born Robert Zimmerman?
8. In which city is the Bridge of Brotherhood and Unity?
9. Who wrote The Doll's House?
10. What is the brightest star in the constellation Lyra?

### Last week's solutions:

- Quiz: 1 Carmen; 2 Arthur Miller; 3 New York;  
4 Force; 5 Costa Rica; 6 Id est; 7 Tarragon;  
8 Montana; 9 Dolphin; 10 Socrates.

### Niner: HARMONIES

## Niner

Each number from 1 to 9 represents a different letter. Solve the clues and insert the letters in the appropriate squares to discover a word which uses all nine letters.

17235  
31175678  
494878

gives a criminal,  
gives a second criminal,  
gives a money lender.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

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OLD or NEW

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# PROPERTY

YOUR WEEKLY  
GUIDE TO HOME  
BUYING AND  
LETTING

## Detached new-build bungalow located in popular cul-de-sac

Number 14, Brindley Bank Road, Rugeley, is an individually designed two-double-bedroomed detached bungalow in a popular cul-de-sac.

It is for sale through Boot & Son at £215,000.

With gas central heating and double glazing, it has gardens, a reception hall, lounge, dining kitchen, two double bedrooms, en-suite shower room and a ten year warranty.

In more detail the en-suite shower room/wet room includes a shower, hand basin and a low flush WC, while the bathroom has a bath, a hand basin and a WC.

With the kitchen, the buyer will get a choice of doors and worktops from a selected range. It will include a stainless steel sink unit with chrome taps, an electric cooker, gas hob and an extractor hood over, an integrated fridge/freezer, integrated dishwasher and ceramic floor tiling to a prime cost figure from the builder's range.

The bathroom and en-suite will have a high fashion bathroom suite in white with chrome mixer taps and fittings, part ceramic tiling to the bathroom and en-suite with a choice of border tiles and an extractor fan. Also included will be a chrome heated towel rail and a shower over the bath, with decorative finishes.

Internally, white pannelled doors will be fitted with chrome door furniture, there will be smooth ceilings throughout and painted white gloss painted woodwork, with the walls finished in emulsion.

There will also be integral smoke detectors and a loft light and gas central heating with energy efficient combination condensing boiler.

Outside, the landscaped gardens will include turf, an Indian Sandstone paved patio, lighting, high security access doors with multiple locks, having a choice of colours subject to early reservation. The windows are white coloured double glazed ones and there will be a gravelled drive and a joint shared drive.

RUGELEY £215,000



### TO VIEW THIS PROPERTY

AGENT: Boot & Son

TEL: 01543 505454

EMAIL: [info@bootandson.co.uk](mailto:info@bootandson.co.uk)

### KEY FEATURES

New-build detached bungalow

Individually designed

2 double bedrooms

Cul-de-sac location

Off-road parking



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- Professional accredited local agent service
- Free valuation
- Local area knowledge
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- Registered house hunters
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If you are thinking of selling, look no further than the estate agents in these pages for the best local advice available.



Rugeley  
01889 358689

# Jayman

Cannock  
01543 505566

## Railway Court, Norton Canes

NEW



Offers Around £55,000

Two Bedroom Apartment  
Lounge  
Kitchen  
Bathroom  
60% Shared Ownership  
Awaiting EPC

## Earlswood Way, Cannock



Offers Around £70,000

Second Floor Apartment  
Two Bedrooms  
Lounge  
Kitchen  
60% Shared Ownership  
EPC C

## New Road, Featherstone

NEW



Offers Around £80,000

Park Home  
Two Bedrooms  
Lounge  
Kitchen  
Garden  
Off Road Parking

## Sycamore Green, Cannock



Offers Around £135,000

Semi Detached Property  
Two Bedrooms  
Lounge  
Kitchen / Diner  
Utility Room  
EPC C

## Littleworth Road, Cannock



Offers Around £130,000

Terraced Property  
Two Bedrooms  
Two Reception Rooms  
Bathroom  
Off Road Parking  
EPC D

## School Lane, Shreshill



Offers Around £400,000

Detached Dormer Bungalow  
Two Bedrooms  
Two Bathrooms  
Off Road Parking  
Sough After Area  
Awaiting EPC

## Curlew Hil, Cannock



Offers Around £150,000

Semi Detached Property  
Three Bedrooms  
Fully Renovated  
Tandem Garage  
Front & Rear Gardens  
EPC E

## Rectory Gardens, Rugeley



Offers Around £155,000

Terraced Property  
Three Bedrooms  
Lounge  
Kitchen  
Garage  
EPC E

## Lichfield Road, Armitage



Offers Around £170,000

Semi Detached Bungalow  
Three Bedrooms  
Lounge  
Garage  
NO CHAIN  
EPC C

## Woodheyas Lawns, Rugeley



Offers Around £190,000

Semi Detached Property  
Four Bedrooms  
Extended  
Utility Room  
Rear Garden  
Awaiting EPC

## River View, Penkridge



Offers Around £195,000

New Build  
Two Bedrooms  
Lounge / Diner  
Kitchen  
Parking  
Awaiting EPC

## Benton Crescent, Walsall

NEW



£120,000

Three Bedrooms  
Bathroom  
Good Sized Rear Garden  
Lounge  
Dining Room  
Awaiting EPC

## Chase Side Drive, Rugeley



Offers Around £200,000

Detached Property  
Three Bedrooms  
Kitchen/Breakfast  
Integral Garage  
Private Rear Garden  
EPC D

## Woodmill, Yoxall



Offers Around £215,000

Terraced Cottage  
Two Bedrooms  
Kitchen/Diner  
Rear Garden  
Rural Location  
EPC E

## Rickerscote, Staffordshire



Offers Around £220,000

Well Presented Cottage  
Two Bedrooms  
Lounge  
Kitchen  
Well Maintained Gardens  
EPC E

## Newlands Court, Cannock

NEW



Offers Around £259,995

Detached Property  
Four Bedrooms  
En Suite  
Utility  
Conservatory  
EPC D

## Canterbury Drive, Rugeley



Offers Around £265,000

Detached Property  
Four Bedrooms  
Two Bathrooms  
Sought After Location  
Garage  
EPC C

## Richardson Way

NEW



Offers Around £270,000

Detached Property  
Four Bedrooms  
Cinema Room  
Conservatory  
NO CHAIN  
EPC C

## Lakeside Drive, Norton Canes

NEW



£210,000

Three/Four Bedrooms  
Lounge  
Dining Room/Study  
Guest WC  
Garage  
Awaiting EPC

## Holly Hill Road, Rugeley



Offers Around £410,000

Detached Dormer Bungalow  
Four / Five Bedrooms  
Well Presented  
Garage  
Part Exchange Considered  
EPC C

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THE DAILY NEWS





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**Our Christmas/New Year**  
**Opening Hours are as follows:**  
**Wednesday 20th December**  
**2017 closing at 5.15pm**  
**Re-opening**  
**Tuesday 2nd January 2018**  
**at 9.00am**  
 Angi, Diane and The Teams  
 wish all our clients a very  
**Merry Christmas**  
 and a **Happy New Year**  
**See you all in 2018**



NEW

CHESTER ROAD  
RUGELEY

A two bedroomed mid-terraced property on a sought after development. Gas centrally heated and UPVC double-glazed throughout. Entrance Porch, Entrance Hallway, Kitchen and Lounge. First Floor Landing with Two Bedrooms and Bathroom. Garden to front and rear. Allocated parking. EPC RATING - TBC

£130,000



NEW

NO CHAIN

RECTORY LANE  
ARMITAGE

Offered with NO UPWARD CHAIN is this refurbished end-terraced bungalow situated in popular village location. UPVC double-glazed and Gas centrally heated. Lounge, Fitted Kitchen, Two Bedrooms, Inner Hallway and Bathroom. Gardens to front and rear. Driveway to rear. EPC rating D

£145,000



NEW

NO CHAIN

LODGE ROAD  
BRERETON

Offered with NO UPWARD CHAIN is this family home positioned on the popular Five Oaks estate. UPVC double-glazed and Gas centrally heated. Entrance Hall, Lounge, Dining Room, Kitchen. First Floor landing with Three Bedrooms and Bathroom. SINGLE GARAGE with gardens to front and rear. EPC rating D

£160,000



NEW PRICE

BRAMBLE WAY  
ETCHINGHILL

In need of further upgrade but positioned in a popular cul-de-sac position is this two bedroomed link-detached bungalow. Entrance Hall, Kitchen, Lounge, Inner Hallway, Two Bedrooms and Bathroom. Gardens to front and rear. COVERED CARPORT. EPC rating E

£175,000



NEW

TALBOT HOUSE  
BRERETON

A three-storey Grade 2, Georgian property within a popular location having original features. Entrance Porch, Reception Hall, Lounge, Guest Cloakroom, Cellar. First Floor landing with Lounge, Breakfast Kitchen and Study. Second Floor Landing with Two Bedrooms and Bathroom. Parking and Garage in block. EPC rating D

£180,000



NEW

ARMITAGE ROAD  
RUGELEY

Viewing of this delightful property is essential to appreciate the character and charm. UPVC double-glazed and Gas centrally heated throughout. Dining Room, Lounge and Kitchen. First Floor Landing with Three Bedrooms and Family Bathroom. EPC RATING - D

£185,000



NEW

MERSEY CLOSE  
RUGELEY

A well presented and extended four bedroomed family home situated in a cul-de-sac. Entrance Hall, Guest Cloakroom, Lounge, Fitted Kitchen, Snug, Conservatory, Inner Hallway, Utility Area, Ground Floor Bedroom with En-suite Wet Room. Landing with Three Bedrooms and Bathroom. Driveway to front. Enclosed garden area to rear with LARGE STORAGE SHED. EPC RATING - C

£235,000



NO CHAIN

TITHEBARN ROAD  
RUGELEY

Offered with NO UPWARD CHAIN is this detached bungalow in popular location. UPVC double-glazed and Gas centrally heated. Side Entrance Hall, Lounge, Dining Room, Fitted Kitchen. Three Bedrooms and Bathroom. Driveway to side. Single Garage and gardens to front and rear. EPC Rating D

£260,000



NEW HOME

NO CHAIN

VICTORIA STREET  
HEDNESFORD

Viewing of this spacious brand new detached bungalow built by Charmford Homes. Non-Estate position. UPVC double-glazed and Gas centrally Heated. Entrance Hall, Open plan Lounge with Living Kitchen, Three Bedrooms and Bathroom. Large driveway to front with enclosed garden to rear. EPC rating: to be confirmed

£289,995



STONEFIELDS CLOSE  
CANNOCK

A two bedroomed detached bungalow in a quiet cul-de-sac. Gas centrally heated and UPVC double-glazed throughout. Entrance Porch, Kitchen/Diner, Lounge and Second reception room. Inner Hallway, Shower Room and Two Bedrooms. Gardens to front and rear. Driveway and Detached Garage. EPC RATING - D

£280,000



CHASELEY ROAD  
ETCHINGHILL

A traditional extended four bedroomed detached family home in a sought after location. Through Hallway, Two Reception Rooms, Breakfast Kitchen, Inner Hallway and Utility Room. Landing. Four Bedrooms, Family Bathroom and Shower Room. Garage with Driveway offering off road parking. Large Garden of approximately 3/4 of an acre (un measured) EPC Rating - E

£399,950



IVY MANOR  
ABBOTS BROMLEY

A stunning family home offering spacious accommodation of Large Reception Hall, Guest Cloakroom, Study, Lounge, Dining Kitchen. First Floor Landing with Four Bedrooms one having an en-suite shower room plus Family Bathroom. Second Floor Master Suite with Bedroom area, Dressing area and En-suite Shower Room. Gardens to front and rear. DETACHED DOUBLE GARAGE. EPC rating B

£570,000

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(First months rent half price) - 2 bed house

**The Sidings - £500pcm**

(First months rent half price) - 2 bed flat

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**Bow Street - £520pcm - 1 bed flat**

**Jubilee Street - £535pcm - 3 bed house**



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SHARON WAY

3 BED

Link Detached House  
Lounge  
Kitchen Diner  
3 Bedrooms  
Bathroom  
GCH & DG

Rear Garden  
Garage  
Driveway  
EPC Rating D

£675 pcm & FEES - NO DSS

**CHESLYN HAY**  
STATION STREET

3 BED

Unfurnished  
Terrace House  
Lounge  
Dining Room  
Kitchen  
3 Bedrooms

Bathroom  
Gas Central Heating  
Double Glazing  
Rear Garden  
EPC Rating E

£595 pcm & FEES - NO DSS

**WIMBLEBURY**  
FOXTAIL WAY

Town House  
Lounge  
Kitchen  
2 Bedrooms  
Bathroom  
Gas Central Heating

Double Glazing  
Rear Garden  
Garage  
Parking  
EPC Rating C

£575 pcm & FEES - NO DSS

**CANNOCK**  
HEATHGAP ROAD

SOLD

Detached  
Lounge Diner  
Kitchen  
Utility  
Study  
3 Bedrooms

Bathroom  
GCH & DG  
Garage  
Rear Garden  
EPC Rating D

SSTC

**HEATH HAYES**  
LYNDHURST ROAD

SOLD

Semi Detached  
Bungalow  
Lounge  
Breakfast Kitchen  
3 Bedrooms  
Family Bathroom

En Suite  
Gas Central Heating  
Extensive Driveway  
Rear Garden  
Swimming Pool  
EPC Rating D

SSTC

**HEDNESFORD**  
FOSTER AVENUE

SOLD

Semi Detached  
House  
Newly Refurbished  
Lounge  
Kitchen  
3 Bedrooms

Bathroom  
GCH & DG  
Driveway  
Large Rear Garden  
EPC Rating D

SSTC

**CANNOCK**  
STONE CROFT

NEW

Unfurnished  
Terrace House  
Lounge  
Kitchen Diner  
2 Bedrooms  
Bathroom

Heating  
Double Glazing  
Rear Garden  
Parking  
EPC Rating D

£525 pcm & FEES - NO DSS

**CANNOCK**  
CANNOCK ROAD

NEW

Unfurnished  
Semi Detached  
House  
Lounge  
Dining Room  
Kitchen

2 Bedrooms  
Bathroom  
Gas Central Heating  
Double Glazing  
Rear Garden  
EPC Rating E

£525 pcm & FEES - NO DSS

**HEATH HAYES**  
CHAPEL STREET

NEW

Unfurnished  
Semi Detached  
House  
Lounge  
Dining Room  
Kitchen

2 Bedrooms  
Bathroom  
Gas Central Heating  
Garden  
EPC Rating D

£495 pcm & FEES - NO DSS

**CANNOCK**  
BEECH TREE COURT

NEW

Unfurnished  
Ground & First  
Floor Flat  
Lounge  
Kitchen  
2 Bedrooms

Bathroom  
Gas Central Heating  
Double Glazing  
Parking  
EPC Rating C

£495 pcm & FEES - NO DSS

**CANNOCK**  
PEREGRINE WAY

NEW

Unfurnished  
First Floor Flat  
Lounge  
Kitchen  
1 Bedroom  
Bathroom

Gas Central Heating  
Double Glazing  
Parking  
EPC Rating C

£460 pcm & FEES - NO DSS

**BLOXWICH**  
STONEY LANE

LET  
SIMILAR  
PROPERTIES  
REQUIRED

Unfurnished  
Terrace Town House  
Lounge  
Kitchen  
3 Bedrooms  
Bath & Shower Room

Gas Central Heating  
Double Glazing  
Rear Garden  
Parking  
EPC Rating B

£650 pcm & FEES - NO DSS

**CANNOCK**  
NEWHALL STREET

NEW

Modern Detached  
House  
Lounge  
Kitchen Diner  
Guest WC  
3 Bedrooms

En Suite  
Bathroom  
Gas Central Heating  
Double Glazing  
Allocated Parking  
EPC Rating C

£225,000

**CANNOCK**  
NEWHALL STREET

NEW

Traditional Detached  
House  
Lounge  
Kitchen Diner  
2nd Reception Room  
Guest WC

3 Bedrooms  
Bathroom  
Gas Central Heating  
Double Glazing  
Allocated Parking  
EPC Rating D

£215,000

**STONNALL**  
MAIN STREET

NO CHAIN

First Floor Maisonette  
Lounge  
Breakfast Kitchen  
2 Bedrooms  
Bathroom  
Gas Central Heating

Allocated Parking  
Outstanding Views  
EPC Rating F

£155,000

**HUNTINGTON**  
REDWING DRIVE

REDUCED

Terrace House  
Lounge  
Kitchen  
2 Bedrooms  
Bathroom  
Gas Central Heating

Front and Rear  
Gardens  
Driveway  
EPC Rating D

£125,000

**NORTON CANES**  
BRAEMAR ROAD

SOLD

Semi Detached  
House  
Lounge  
Kitchen  
Conservatory  
Guest WC

2 Bedrooms  
Bathroom  
En Suite  
GCH & DG  
Garage & Garden  
AWAITING EPC

SSTC

**CANNOCK**  
WOLVERHAMPTON ROAD

INVESTMENT  
PURCHASE  
Protected Access  
Lounge  
Kitchen  
1 Bedroom

Shower Room  
Double Glazing  
Parking  
EPC Rating C

£77,500

## Merry Christmas & Happy New Year

from everyone at  
Keable Homes Sales & Lettings



Our office will be closed from  
12pm on Thursday 21st December  
2017 and will reopen on  
Tuesday 2nd January 2018.

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Upper Landywood Lane  
CHESLYN HAY



Immaculately Presented Four Bedroom Detached House / Large Plot 1/4 Acre in Size / Several Spacious Reception Rooms / Large Private & Secluded Rear Garden

£600,000

Rugeley Road  
HAZEL SLADE



Spacious & immaculately presented four bedroom dormer style home / Highly desirable rural location of Hazelslade and backs directly onto Cannock Chase / Rear conservatory / Breakfast kitchen with utility

Offers in Excess of £425,000

Stafford Road  
GREAT WYRLEY



Beautifully presented three bedroom detached family home / Private gated driveway / Extremely private & secure plot / Remote controlled gated entrance / Spacious living accommodation

Offers in the Region Of £365,000

Walsall Road  
GREAT WYRLEY



Stunning character property dating back to the 1750s / Spacious five bedroom link detached home / Numerous reception rooms / Inglenook fireplaces / Exposed oak beams

£350,000

Sycamore Hill  
CANNOCK WOOD



Well presented three bedroom detached bungalow / Highly desirable and sought after village location / Renovated and refurbished to a good standard throughout

£335,000

Wimblebury Road  
WIMBLEBURY



Well presented four bedroom detached house / Finished to high specification throughout / Set back from main road / Shared private driveway / Spacious living & sleeping accommodation

Offers in Excess of £270,000

## WHY PAY MORE WHEN YOU CAN PAY LESS!

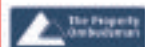
## THE SAVINGS YOU WILL MAKE

Sale Price Achieved	Standard Estate Agent's Fee @ 2.16% Inc VAT	Lovett&Co Estate Agent Fee @ 0.9% Inc VAT	The Savings YOU will make with Lovett&Co.
£105,000	£2,268	£997	£1,271
£150,000	£3,240	£1,425	£1,815
£200,000	£4,320	£1,900	£2,420
£300,000	£6,480	£2,860	£3,630
£500,000	£10,800	£4,760	£6,050

\*Standard Estate Agents Fee Staffordshire @2.16% Inc VAT. Source: Rightmove (April 2017)



Zoopla.co.uk



Levett Grange  
RUGELEY



Immaculately presented detached family home / Sought after location / Spacious living & sleeping accommodation / Modern breakfast kitchen, bathroom & en-suite

£250,000

Burnthill Lane  
RUGELEY



Four bedroom detached family home / Set on a good sized corner plot / NO ONWARD CHAIN / Driveway and an integral garage / Superb reception style conservatory

£245,000

St David Close  
RAWNSLEY



Four bedroom detached house / Quiet cul-de-sac / Sought after semi-rural setting of Rawnsley / Spacious lounge and separate dining room

£240,000

Badgers Way  
HEATH HAYES



Well presented two bedroom detached bungalow / Set on enviable corner plot at end of private driveway / Spacious open plan lounge-diner / Delightful rear conservatory

£239,950

Waverley Gardens  
ETCHING HILL



Four bedroom detached house / Delightful views of Cannock Chase to the rear / Useful ground floor bedroom and shower room / Spacious lounge and open plan kitchen-diner

£215,000

The Beeches  
RUGELEY



Well presented three bedroom detached house / Quiet cul-de-sac / Freshly decorated throughout / Good sized private front and rear gardens / Off road parking and a garage

Offers in Excess of £190,000

Longacres  
HEDNESFORD



Extended four bedroom semi detached house / Quiet cul-de-sac location / NO ONWARD CHAIN / Single integral garage / Driveway for two vehicles

£185,000

Alpine Drive  
HEDNESFORD



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# World's best-selling SUV is refreshed

By Ian Donaldson

When a thicker-rimmed steering wheel and a new badge on the radiator grille are talked about features of a newly updated car you might expect nothing very fundamental has changed on the vehicle they're attached to.

And you'd be right. But in the case of Nissan's X-Trail, at least, there are very sound reasons for not tampering with what you've got already.

This larger of Nissan's SUV offerings (bigger than the British-built Qashqai), the X-Trail is the world's best selling SUV. More than 766,000 of them went to owners around the globe is the last financial year.

You meddle with a success like that at your peril, but it's in the DNA of car companies that mid-way through a model's life cycle it comes in for a bit of a refresh. That gives them (and the motoring press) something to talk about and the car dealer a reason to talk to customers too.

So say hello to the refreshed X-Trail, complete with new lights and bumpers, added flashes of chrome and a touch of gloss black – all intended, we're told, to add a touch of aggression to the looks of a car that is now 50mm longer than before.

Inside, there's a flat bottomed steering wheel with a thicker rim, jointly adding – Nissan hopes – a sporty feel and safer grip. Slimming down the wheel's centre and spokes has made the already clear instruments even easier to read – a precise 17 per cent better, says Nissan! Heated seats front and rear are now standard on the top Tekna grade and there's the option of tan leather (a rather smart orangey look) to relieve the blackness of the standard X-Trail cabin.



There's a sportier feel in the cabin

Subtle changes to boot design have released another 15 litres of space (now 565 litres) on cars fitted with two rows of seats. As ever, there is a £1,000 option (£660 on Tekna) of a pair of third row seats, with space for larger children or smaller adults.

Tekna owners now enjoy an eight speaker Bose sound system (on five-seat versions) while every X-Trail now has DAB radio as standard for the first time.

Talking of Tekna, this high end trim level is comfortably the most popular with 47 per cent of sales going to the grade that now starts at £32,810 for a car with two-wheel drive, manual gearbox and 130 horsepower 1.6 litre diesel engine. The range tops out at £37,410 for a Tekna with more powerful 177 horsepower 2.0 litre diesel and a CVT Xtronic automatic gearbox and all-wheel drive.

Fuel consumption and emissions across the new ranges from 45.6mpg/145 g/km for the petrol to 57.6mpg/129 g/km for the 1.6 diesel – expected to be the most popular in the range.



There are new lights and bumpers, added flashes of chrome and a touch of gloss black

Showing how customers are happy to spend on the aspirational X-Trail is the mere one per cent who choose the cheapest model, a £24,845 Visia trim with front-wheel drive, manual gearbox and 163 horsepower 1.6 litre petrol engine.

Second best selling version (39 per cent) is also the second most expensive N-Connecta, with the Acenta below it claiming 13 per cent of sales.

Sometime next year buyers will be able to order their X-Trail with ProPILOT, Nissan's approach to a car that drives itself. Not quite there yet, but with the system engaged the

car will steer, accelerate and brake itself on roads with well defined edges and in traffic jams too.

That system wasn't fitted to the cars on the press launch in deepest Wales but there was plenty of time to assess the modest upgrades to a car that was already high on the potential purchase list of many SUV buyers.

A commanding driving position in a cabin obviously built with precision are abiding first impressions, along with a sense of space and clarity to instruments and minor controls.

The petrol powered X-Trail needed more gearchanging than its diesel sibling – not a

criticism, simply a characteristic common to all petrol/diesel comparisons – but was quieter and smoother than the diesel.

But a bigger contrast was the way a diesel with manual gears felt so much more lively and responsive than a car with the same engine but a CVT automatic gearbox. Chalk and cheese, almost.

All the cars rode some indifferent Welsh roads with firmly controlled aplomb and a brief and moderately demanding bit of off-roading a 4WD version showed the X-Trail would go places no owner was ever likely to venture.

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## Driving for better business with VW

Volkswagen Commercial Vehicles, which in June became the first van manufacturer to fit autonomous emergency braking (AEB) systems as standard to all its vans, has teamed up with Driving for Better Business to support a series of events designed to demonstrate the benefits of crash avoidance technology to fleets.

Driving is the most dangerous activity most employees ever undertake – statistically more than coal mining! There are hundreds of thousands of injuries on the roads every year as well as millions of collisions that result in expensive damage to vehicles and property, and prevent businesses functioning effectively. Advanced Driver Assistance Systems (ADAS) are proven to reduce collisions and costs, yet take up of these systems – on cars as well as commercial vehicles – in the UK is poor. One barrier is a lack of customer knowledge about what systems are available, how they work, as well as the benefits ADAS can bring to a fleet.

Driving for Better Business is a long-term campaign which works in association with Highways England and RoadSafe to raise awareness of the importance of work-related road safety in the business community and public sector by using advocates drawn from these communities to promote the business benefits of managing it effectively.

Head of marketing at Volkswagen Commercial Vehicles, Sarah Cox, said: "When we took the decision earlier this year to give our customers safety as standard by fitting AEB to all our vans, we knew it was the right thing to do: it would keep drivers safe, vehicles on the road and reduce costs.

"Teaming up with Driving for Better Business gives us the opportunity to show fleet managers how the technology really works. A description or video is a good start, but when you experience how ADAS works from the driving seat or in front of your eyes, it brings home how effective the systems are."

Campaign director at Driving for Better Business, Simon Turner, added: "We're delighted that Volkswagen Commercial Vehicles is supporting our events. We conducted research earlier this year that found a significant barrier to many fleets specifying AEB is that it is often an extra cost option which falls outside their procurement policy. I applaud Volkswagen Commercial Vehicles for such a bold and industry-leading move and hope other manufacturers follow its example. Working together with our other partners, we can show fleet managers the technologies in action in a controlled environment, and in the care of highly trained instructors and engineers. This is a unique opportunity to see how these new technologies and systems work, and experience how they interact with the driver and the car's other control systems."

The first two events were fully subscribed, with delegates not only learning about the variety of systems available and experiencing ADAS in action, but also understanding the business case for these technologies and their impact on repair costs. A further two will be held on March 20 and 21, 2018 at Thatcham Research's Upper Heyford Proving Ground in Oxfordshire. For details and to reserve your place, visit [www.drivingforbetterbusiness.com/stopthecrash](http://www.drivingforbetterbusiness.com/stopthecrash)

Earlier this year, Volkswagen became the first commercial vehicle brand to fit all its vans with AEB (Front Assist with City Emergency Braking), meaning all customers buying a new Caddy, Transporter or Crafter are guaranteed safety as standard. According to Thatcham, AEB systems are 'probably the most significant development in vehicle safety since the seat belt' and have the potential to save more than 1000 lives and 120,000 casualties over the next ten years.

# Second generation safety sense package due in 2018

**For advanced vehicle safety systems to realise best potential to reduce the number of traffic accidents and fatalities, they need to be operating on large numbers of vehicles.**

That's why in 2015 Toyota decided to launch the democratisation of these technologies in its cars with Toyota Safety Sense, a set of active safety features designed to help prevent or mitigate the consequences of collisions across a wide range of traffic situations.

By making Toyota Safety Sense a standard feature or an affordable option on large numbers of its cars, Toyota helps larger numbers of motorists – and other road users – to benefit from the safeguards it can provide. The package includes a Pre-Collision System (PCS), Lane Departure Alert (LDA), Road Sign Assist (RSA) and Automatic High Beam (AHB). Vehicles equipped with a millimetre-wave radar further benefit from Adaptive Cruise control and PCS with a pedestrian detection function.

More than five million Toyotas worldwide are now using Toyota Safety Sense; in Europe, 92 per cent of new cars are fitted with the technology. Studies in Japan reveal that in real-world traffic conditions there has been an approximate 50 per cent reduction in rear-end collisions – and a decrease of around 90 per cent where Toyota Safety Sense operates in combination with an Intelligent Clearance Sonar (ICS).

### Safe mobility

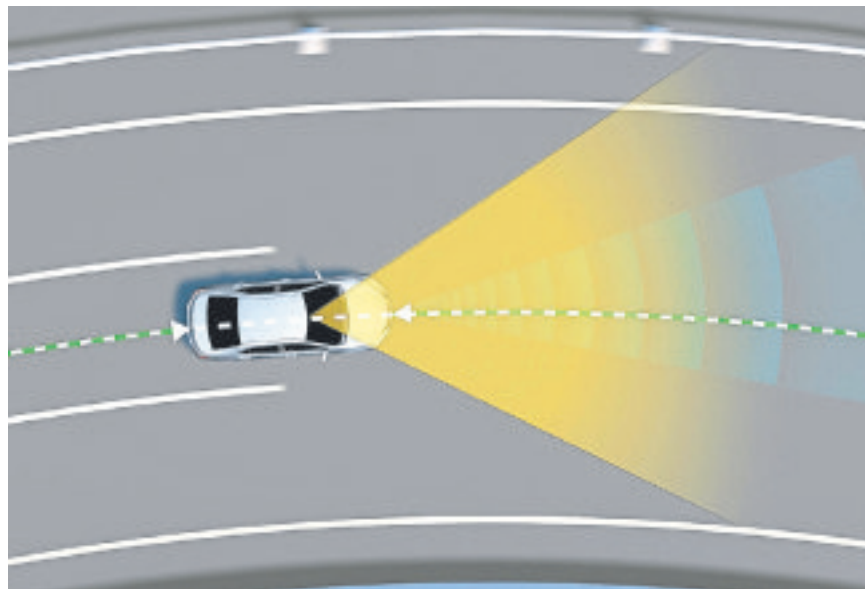
Toyota is committed to achieving a safe mobility society and believes it is important to take an approach that involves people, vehicles and the traffic environment, as well as pursuing real-world safety by learning from accidents and incorporating that knowledge in its vehicle development.

True to the company's Kaizen philosophy of continuous improvement, Toyota is introducing the second generation Toyota Safety Sense. This comes with an improved system unit, an upgraded PCS function and new Lane Tracing Assist (LTA), while retaining the established ACC, RSA and AHB functions. Vehicles will use a single-lens camera and millimetre – wave radar with higher performance, increasing the scope of hazard detection and improving functionality.

Between speeds of approximately six and 112mph, the upgraded Pre-Collision System will detect vehicles ahead and reduce the risk of hitting them from the back. The system can also detect potential collisions with pedestrians (in day and night-time driving) and cyclists (during daylight hours), with automated braking operating at relative speeds between six and 50mph.

The new Lane Tracing Assist keeps the vehicle centred in its highway lane by helping the driver with steering control, when the Adaptive Cruise Control is operating. LTA also comes with an upgraded Lane Departure Alert which can recognise the margins of straight roads, even when white line markings are not used. Should the vehicle deviate from its lane, the system will sound a warning and provided assistance for the driver to steer the car back to its correct course.

The second generation Toyota Safety Sense will be progressively rolled out from the start of 2018.



The upgraded Pre-Collision System will detect obstacles ahead and reduce the risk of hitting them

## A warning from police

Police are urging motorists to "think twice" following the conviction of a woman for causing death by dangerous driving while she was talking hands-free on a mobile phone.

Samantha Ayres, 34, of West Street, Horncastle, Lincs., collided head-on with a motorcycle while she was in the middle of a hands-free call. The rider, 26-year-old David Kirk, from Lincoln, died at the scene.

Lincolnshire Police temporary inspector of the serious collision investigation unit Ewan Gell told the Press Association: "Anything that distracts you from that singular act of driving, you should put it away to one side and think 'I'm not going to do that until I've finished what I'm doing'."

He added: "If you want to talk to somebody, want to use a mobile device

or mess about with your music – in fact, anything that distracts you from doing the task in hand of driving – you should think twice about.

"We will investigate every single aspect of a crash and if that turns up, as it did in this case, evidence of a prolonged conversation and you can link that to the cause of the crash, that's when a lot of people are going to have a problem."

It was revealed that Ayres, a teaching assistant, had drifted across on to the other side of Baumber Road, Horsington, when the crash happened. She had been on a phone call for 27 minutes.

She was found guilty on November 29, 2017, of causing death by dangerous driving, and was sentenced at Lincolnshire Crown Court to three years in prison.



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# Vauxhall's go-faster Insignia GSi

Vauxhall has announced that the performance variant of its Insignia will cost from £33,375 when it arrives in showrooms in March 2018.

The Insignia GSi is 160kg lighter than its predecessor, the Insignia VXR, and is available in both Grand Sport and Sports Tourer body styles.

The new model is available with a choice of two engines: a 2.0-litre turbocharged petrol unit and a 2.0-litre biturbo diesel.

As far as performance figures are concerned, the petrol power plant produces 256bhp and 400Nm of torque, while the diesel unit develops 207bhp and 480Nm of torque. Power is sent to all four wheels via an eight-speed automatic gearbox.

In Grand Sport guise, the Insignia GSi can complete the sprint from 0-60mph in as little as 6.9 seconds, and will hit a 155mph top speed. Brembo brakes ensure the car has sufficient stopping power to match that of the engine.

CO2 emissions range between 192g/km and 199g/km depending on body style and engine choice.

Both petrol and diesel versions of the Grand Sport variant are priced from £33,375, while the more practical Sports Tourer estate configuration is available from £34,875.

Style-wise, the Insignia GSi benefits from LED headlights, chrome air intakes, sporty front and rear bumpers, side sills and a large rear spoiler on Grand Sport models. Large 20-inch alloys fill the car's wheel arches, which are shod in sticky Michelin Sport Pilot 4 tyres.

Moving into the cabin, customers will find leather-upholstered sports seats up front, aluminium pedals, a Bose sound system and



The car has large 20-inch alloys



an eight-inch touchscreen that controls the infotainment system and navigation.

The Insignia GSi also gains Vauxhall's FlexRide system that allows the driver to adjust the steering, damping, gear change points and stability programming by selecting one of four different driving modes.

Vauxhall developed the new Insignia GSi at the famed Nurburgring in Germany, and has claimed that it is their fastest model to ever lap the iconic circuit – although no time has been released.



In Grand Sport guise, the Insignia GSi can complete the sprint from 0-60mph in as little as 6.9 seconds, and will hit a 155mph top speed

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## Deaths

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Wilfred

Of Cheslyn Hay.

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His Funeral Service will take place 10am, Tuesday, December 19, at Bushbury Crematorium, East Chapel.

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## In Memoriam

**PUGH**

John

December 15, 2016.

To hear your voice, to see your smile, to sit and talk awhile, to be together in the same old way, would be my dearest wish for every day.

Your loving Wife Pam.

X X X

**Dad**

We miss your hugs and kisses still and we always will, one year has passed without you, we can't believe it's true. You're loved and missed so very much.

Lots of love, Pam, Caroline, Emily and Jack.

X X

## Deaths

## FAMILY ANNOUNCEMENT CUSTOMER INFORMATION

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Call Brian: 07923 538178.

3  
Home & Services

Furniture

katharine  
house  
furniture  
Reg charity  
number:  
1011712

**Furniture not sold, why not donate it?**

We can turn your quality used furniture into 1st class care for patients at Katharine House

Call us now on

01543 466885

for details or to arrange a

FREE collection

In Your Garden

SLABS 450mm x 450mm RIVEN  
FACED, only £1.87 inc. VAT.  
Ranton Building Supplies:  
01543 276006.

Items For Sale

ADVERTISERS ARE REMINDED

That the Business Advertisements (Disclosure) Order of 1977 requires that advertisements must clearly differentiate between Private and Trade.

ASH RECLAMATION new and used building materials, upvc doors and windows 01543 453222.

HAVE YOU CHECKED your advertisement today? We would respectfully remind advertisers that it is their responsibility to inform the publishers of any mistakes or inaccuracies on the first day of publication.

Antiques

**ANTIQUES WANTED**

Furniture, Clocks, China, Medals, Coins,

Old wind-up Wrist and Pocket Watches

Paintings, Gold/Silver/Costume Jewellery

**CHASE ANTIQUES**

(Over 40 Years Trading)

**01543 572367 07831 818024**

**Louis Taylor**  
Fine Art Auctioneers & Valuers  
Antique valuations first  
Wednesday of every month, 10am - 2pm  
Ancient High House Museum, Stafford, ST16 2JA  
01782 638100

Items Wanted

**CASH PAID NOW! WANTED TOOLS**

Hand Tools, Anything considered

**01543 452 491**

**07539 340307**

A BEST CASH PRICE PAID  
for antiques, vintage furniture,  
leather-winged arm chairs &  
chesterfield settees.

**01902 454144 or**

**0121 5263375**

✓ **CASH PAID**

**£300+ PER OUNCE**

**FOR 9 CARAT GOLD.**

**ANY AMOUNT COLLECTED!**

HOUSE CLEARANCES!

gold coins, pre - 47 silver coins,

watches, costume jewellery, porcelain, any

oriental items, old brass items, any silver

items, War medals military etc.

**Lady Buyer**

Call: 01922 495066

or 07971 783206 ✓

**AIR GUNS, VINTAGE/ ANTIQUE GUNS, SHOT GUNS, TAXIDERMY-MATCH AIR RIFLES WANTED**

**FIRST WORLD WAR & SECOND WORLD WAR MEMORABILIA REQUIRED**

**07968 624202**

READERS ARE ADVISED TO

carefully consider all of their options

before agreeing to the sale of any

of their items.

Loans

READERS ARE REMINDED  
that they may require professional advice before entering into obligations.

t.v. / home entertainment

Service

**CLASSIFIEDS BOOSTS BUSINESS!**



"TV Link are really pleased with their response from their Classified Campaign"

Bill - TV Link

For great business results call

**01902 319 191**

**Classified Ads**

Brought to you by Express & Star

**AERIAL AND TV SPECIALIST**  
Any TV Repairs. Digital aerials, sky, CCTV cameras, TV wall mounts and TV set ups. 07850 330251.

specialists at your service

Aerials

**AA DIGITAL AERIALS**

**AERIALS FITTED FROM £79.99**

01902 858191 • 01384 429166

01543 439095 • 01922 716029

A AERIAL AND SKY SPECIALIST  
Digital aerials, CCTV cameras, TV wall mount fitted. 07850 330251.

**CLASSIFIEDS BOOSTS BUSINESS!**



"I am very pleased with the response I get from my Classified Advertising Contract"

Steve - AA Digital Aerials

For great business results call

**01902 319 191**

**Classified Ads**

Brought to you by Express & Star

Alarms/Security

**PREMIER ALARMS**

Supplied and Fitted £249

Servicing and Repairs

12 Months Warranty

All areas covered

All quotes beaten!

Call: 0121 601 9791

Building Supplies

RECLAIMED BRICKS, Tiles, Slates, Oakbeams, Flooring, York Stone, Cawarden 01889 574066. sales@cawardenreclaim.co.uk

Carpet Fitters

A CARPETS & VINYLs supplied or just fitted, quality samples brought to your home, no job too small, free quotes call Mark 01543 820598 / 07941 619634.

CCTV

RAPID SECURITY CCTV & Alarms  
Cameras, supplied and fitted, domestic and commercial, same day service, free call out. Call Robbi on 07960 173589/ 0800 633 5899.

**Christmas Trees/ Wreaths**

**CHRISTMAS TREES**  
Pine & Nordmann Fir from £20  
with FREE mistletoe  
Holly Wreaths from £5.  
TIMBERLAND FARM, 5 WOLVERHAMPTON ROAD, SHARPSHILL, WY10 1LY  
Open 7 days a week

Double Glazing Repairs

S.P.S replace misted glass, locks, hinges, windows, doors, guaranteed. OAP discount. 07983 704889

Electricians



Express & Star

**ELECTRICIANS!**

**CLAIM YOUR FREE ADVERT**  
(T&Cs Apply)

Call Claire Smith: 01902 319661  
claire.smith@expressandstar.co.uk

Driveways & Patios

**P.W. DRIVEWAYS**  
The Block Paving Specialists.  
Patios, Driveways, Pathways etc.  
SPECIAL OFFER £50 PSM  
Free Quotes & Advice  
0800 747 1435  
(Based in Great Wyrley)

Fencing

**CLASSIFIEDS BOOSTS BUSINESS!**



"I am extremely happy with the service I get from my Express & Star Classified Sales Representatives and would recommend them to anyone! They have done a very professional job with my website so I get online enquiries as well now."

Michael - Portway Fencing

For great business results call

**01902 319 191**

**Classified Ads**

Brought to you by Express & Star

**BUSHBURY FENCING AND GATES**

SUPPLY AND FITTING SPECIALISTS

FREE QUOTES

**01902 827000**

Fitted Bedrooms

AFFORDABLE BESPOKE FITTED  
Sliding Wardrobes. 07813 675526  
www.interiorstobertstokes.com

Garage Conversions

**TAYLOR MADE**

NEED AN EXTRA ROOM?

Turn your Garage into an extra

• Bedroom / Office

• Kitchen / Granny Flat

• Utility / Playroom

**01902 249779**

Check out our website

taylormadegarageconversions.com

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**Howard Evans**

Domestic Roofing Division

■ All aspects of roofing work undertaken

■ Fully insured with £5,000,000 insurance cover

■ Guarantees offered up to 20 years for flat roofing.

■ A friendly professional service

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info@howarddevansroofingandcladding.co.uk



MG ROOFING Flat roofs, tiling, roof repairs, fascias and gutters. Call 01902 238989 / 07580 465449.

Plans Prepared

ADAM DESIGN, Building Plans.  
Drawn and submitted to council.  
Tel: 01902 620200 / 07841 654037.  
Email: adamdesign@sky.com

Plastering

**MINT PLASTERING**

For the very best in plastering and rendering,

full rooms inc materials from 110. Halls,

stairs and landings from 200

30 years experience.

Free quotes. All work guaranteed

**01543 327130 / 07519 694516**

**M&S PLASTERING & BUILDING SERVICES**  
Home Garden Improvements.  
Over 30 Years Experience  
Mark or Sara: 07741 770897

Plumbing & Heating

**TAD PLUMBING & HEATING**

For all your plumbing needs.

30 years experience

**24 HOUR CALL OUT, NO FEE!**

Call Trevor on 07791 319397

www.tadplumbingandheatingwolverhampton.co.uk

**PLUMBING WORK UNDERTAKEN**

No job too small or large. Call Will

for a free quote on: 07521 411108.

Removals

CALL DEAN NOW: For all your Removal needs. 07429 453209/ 01902 830870 / 01384 940260.

**KT HOUSE REMOVALS**

12 years experience.

SINGLE ITEMS TO FULL LOADS.

LOCAL OR DISTANCE. FULLY INSURED.

Free Quotes - Call Ric on:

**07771 727119**

KC REMOVALS We beat any quote,

full or part loads, all areas. Anything considered. Call on 07867 862227.

Skip Hire

**SKIP HIRE GRAB HIRE SKIP BAGS**

No job is too big or small!

Call for a FREE Quote on

**01902 40 50 60**

**07490 247364**

Upholstery

**MR B'S UPHOLSTERY**

RE-UPHOLSTERING OF SOFA'S,

</



# ClassifiedAds

## NOTICE TO READERS

It is an offence under the Accommodation Agencies Act 1953, for an Agency to charge a fee simply for the registration of your requirements and/or supplying particulars of premises to let.

## Overseas Property

## NOTICE TO READERS

Readers are advised to seek independent legal advice before entering into any financial commitments.

# 7

## Jobs

## Motor Trade

**EXPERIENCED TYRE FITTER** required, Rugeley, must have full driving licence and be able to do car, truck and tractor tyres. Training will be given to the right applicant. CV's to willettsneil@yahoo.com

## Nursing & Carers

**NICE MATURE LADY REQUIRED** Must have knowledge and experience of dementia to assist and accompany a lady with acquired brain injury and Diabetes. It is essential that you are caring, honest and be empathetic to the needs of this lady. 2 days per week - 7 hours per day. £9.25 p.h. Suit retired nurse etc Car owner/driver. Hednesford area. Call 07805 154188 or email tonyandsheliam@gmail.com.

## Part Time - General



**NEWS DELIVERERS** required for all areas of Burntwood. Please contact Customer Services 0800 174 064

**CV MATCHING.**  
IT'S QUICK,  
EASY AND  
FREE

Real opportunities for you

jobs.expressandstar.com  
REAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOU

## Full Time General

Lichfield City Council  
Due to retirements and internal promotions the following vacancies have become available

## ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

(Civic Secretary)  
£20,661 - £22,658 p.a.

To provide administrative and clerical support to the Council, including organisation of civic events and responsibility for secretarial work related to the Mayor and Sheriff's engagements.

## MUSEUM ADMINISTRATION ASSISTANT

£9,977 - £10,567 p.a. (22 hours per week)

The Samuel Johnson Birthplace Museum is looking for a part-time assistant to provide general office support, be responsible for bookshop stock and help to prepare for events that take place at the Museum.

## PART TIME MUSEUM ATTENDANT

£9.01 per hour (30 - 39 hours per month, weekend availability essential)

The Samuel Johnson Birthplace Museum is looking for two friendly, flexible and enthusiastic people with excellent customer service skills and local knowledge to welcome visitors, serve customers in the Bookshop and assist with group visits and events

## CASUAL PREMISES ATTENDANT

£8.09 per hour

To carry out general caretaking duties at the Guildhall, including premises supervision, cleaning, general repairs and maintenance

For further details and application forms contact:

Lichfield City Council, Donegal House, Lichfield, WS13 6LU

Tel: 01543 250011

E-mail: vacancies@lichfield.gov.uk

Or visit the 'News' section of our website www.lichfield.gov.uk for more information

Closing date for all posts - 5pm, Friday 5 January 2018

# 8

## Motoring

Cars Over £1500

EXCELLENT  
CONDITION

PEUGEOT 308 SPORT

1.6

08 plate.

62,000 miles.

Electric blue.

Service history.

12 months MoT.

One lady owner.

Electric windows.

Manual. CD player.

£3,100.

07821 560151.

## Commercial Vehicles

BARGAIN

MERCEDES SPRINTER

LWB,

311CDi,

57 reg,

£2,500 ovno.

07836 568903.

spares &  
accessories

## Mobile Mechanics

MOBILE MECHANICS Service & repairs. Headgasket, clutches and cambelts. 07747 848469.

## Motor Services

**Milner**  
Autotech Limited  
VW Audi and Air Cooled  
Specialists

Diagnostics, servicing,  
MOT, Spares and Repairs.  
Call us for a competitive  
quotation.

Tel: 01785 714404

Penkridge Ind. Estate, ST19 5NZ

A Family Run Business Since 1977

MOT's

# MOTs

# ONLY £24.50

formula one autocentres

CANNOCK WS11 OBN

01543 50 20 00

F1AUTOCENTRES.COM

## Motorbikes

**ALL BIKES WANTED** Anything considered. Pristine, non runners, barn finds, unfinished projects Highways 07971 793661 or 01902 773608.

**WANTED Clean Used Bikes**  
MOT While-U-Wait  
No No Test Fees

\*\*\*DECEMBER SPECIAL\*\*\*

\*\* MOT £29.65\*\*

\*OIL & OIL FILTER CHANGE

FROM £29.99\*

\*\*QUICK FIT TYRES\*\*

\*\*QUICK FIT CHAIN & SPROCKETS\*\*

\*PHONE FOR BEST PRICES\*

WOLSELEY STREET, WOLVERHAMPTON

01902 773608

highway-motorcycles.co.uk

Scrap Vehicles

OUR ADVERTISERS are reminded that it is an offence under the Scrap Metal Dealers Act 2013 to buy scrap cars/metal for cash.

**MCEB**

TOP PRICES PAID FOR

ALL SCRAP CARS,

VANS, BIKES, CLASSICS

Tel: 01902 408176

1000's of parts

available at all times

MONMORE RD. WV1 2TZ

Vehicles Wanted

CROWN MOTORS guarantee best price for your unwanted cars/vans. 07903 549849, buyer will call.

**CARS WANTED**

DEAD OR ALIVE!

Runners/ Non Runners,

MOT Failures.

Can Collect. Cash Waiting!

Scrap Cars

Call 07790 032224

Public Notices

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

THE COUNCIL IS TO CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING PLANNING PROPOSALS

Case Officer - Richard Sunter

Location: Land off Norton Hall Lane and Butts Lane,

Norton Canes

CH/17/450 - Reserved Matters application for 449 dwellings and associated infrastructure (appearance, landscaping, layout and scale for approval) pursuant to planning permission CH/10/0294

All applications may be inspected electronically at the Civic Centre, Beecroft Road, Cannock.

Applications relating to Rugeley and Bretoner may also be inspected by paper file at the Rugeley Area Housing Office, Anson Street, Rugeley.

The Council has published a Service Charter for publicity and information about planning applications and a Code of Conduct for the Planning Process both of which are obtainable from Council Offices free of charge.

If you wish to make comments or representations about any of the above proposals you should do so in writing to the Planning Services Manager, Civic Centre, Beecroft Road, Cannock, WS11 1BG or by emailing to developmentcontrol@cannockchased.gov.uk by 04/01/2018. Please include a daytime telephone number in your reply and quote the appropriate reference when calling or writing.

tel 01543 462621

www.cannockchased.gov.uk

# 10

## Personals

## Personal

**FREE TEXT MESSAGES** from women wanting discreet ADULT FUN! Call 0121 620 2445 for full details. Discretion assured!



MALE 50's

Own home and car, seeks female for friendship and nights out.

Lichfield surrounding areas.

Box Number P21026 ,

Express and Star,

Queen Street,

Wolverhampton, WV1 1ES.

## THE GREENHOUSE SPA

For gay/ bisexual men.

Jacuzzi and restrooms on site.

TV's & ladyboys welcome

Friday evenings.

Open 7 days pw.

2 mins J9 /J10 M6.

0121 5686126

www.gay-sauna.com

**HAVE YOU CHECKED** your advertisement today? We would respectfully remind advertisers that it is their responsibility to inform the publishers of any mistakes or inaccuracies on the first day of publication.

# 9

## Local Information

# FreeAds

# IT'S FREE IT'S EASY

\*Advertise any item **FREE** up to the value of **£250**, simply fill out the details below or book online at **bookanad.expressandstar.co.uk**

ADVERT DETAILS - (ONE WORD PER BOX, 12 WORDS IN TOTAL)

ADVERT 1			
ADVERT 2			
ADVERT 3			
ADVERT 4			
ADVERT 5			
ADVERT 6			

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Postcode: \_\_\_\_\_ Tel No: \_\_\_\_\_

Please send to: ClassifiedAds, Express & Star, 51-53 Queen St, Wolverhampton WV1 1ES.

# IT'S ABSOLUTELY FREE

\*Private advertisers only, no guns, pets, or livestock. Limited time only  
Free adverts are published within 7 days of receipt, in-paper and online and are limited to 3 lines maximum

Buy Local, Sell Local  
01902 317878

# ClassifiedAds



# Local Specialists

## Aerials

**aerial AV**  
custom installs

www.aerialav.co.uk T: 01543 578230  
M: 07866 674839

- Free estimate and call out
- Digital aerial & satellite installations
- HDMI distribution
- WiFi & internet points
- Internet smart TV points
- TV wall installations & bespoke cabling
- Home cinema & audio systems

Freeview sky  
HOANYWHERE™  
digital TV  
freesat

Call Lee Forrester for further information  
Tel: 01543 578230 or 01785 290092  
Mob: 07866 674839  
www.aerialav.co.uk Email: Lee@aerialav.co.uk  
**READ OUR REVIEWS ON BEST OF CANNOCK**

## Cannock Aerials & Satellite

Your local digital aerial specialists serving Cannock and the surrounding areas since 1999

sky Freeview  
freesat

Aerials upgraded/installed/repared - extra viewing points to any room - TV/Digital box tuning sys - same day service - no call out fee - work guaranteed and meter tested - competitive prices for quality products and services

The original and only Cannock Aerials... beware of rogue traders  
Call Phil on 01543 50 62 64

## AERIALS

**D&D Aerials**  
Your Local Registered Installer  
Call Dave or Mike

**Digital Aerials Fitted & Repaired**

- Sky - Freesat - Extra Points
- Senior Citizen Discounts
- TV Tuning & setup
- 5 yrs Guarantee
- Same Day Service

CANNOCK 01543 274777 RUGELEY 01889 587000  
LONGFORD ROAD WS11 0DF BOWER LANE WS15 2RD

## RUGELEY AERIALS & SATELLITE SYSTEMS

**CCTV-CAT 5, AERIALS INSTALLED, SKY/FREESAT BOXES AND DISHES SUPPLIED AND FITTED**

SURROUND SOUND • PLASMA/LCD TV'S INSTALLED AND WALL MOUNTED • MOTORISED SATELLITE SYSTEMS AND EUROPEAN STATIONS

ESTABLISHED SINCE 1960

CONTACT US FOR SERVICE, RELIABILITY AND COST

**FREE Sky HD Box - Sky HD + Boxes in stock**  
For all NEW customers, Terms & conditions apply



**A BUSINESS BUILT ON RECOMMENDATION**

**TEL: RUGELEY 01889 585481**

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### ACCOUNTANCY AND TAXATION

Self Assessment and all accountancy services for the self employed, rental incomes, partnerships and limited companies.

A prompt and reliable service at a sensible cost

For a free appointment please call:

**Robert Ollerenshaw on: Shenstone**

**01543 481329**

Email: ollerenshaws@btinternet.com www.ollerenshaws.co.uk

Evening appointments not a problem

## Appliance Repairs

### REPAIRS, SPARES & SALES

**WASHING MACHINES  
TUMBLE DRYERS  
ELECTRIC COOKERS**

**FREE Delivery & Fitting On All Appliances**

**FREE Delivery on DIY Spares Over £10**

Most makes Repaired | Hotpoint trained 35 years experience  
Dyson Repairs & Spares

**Re-conditioned Machines £149**  
12 Months Guarantee

**REPAIR FORCE**

Tel: 01543 275333 or 07966 267 308

W: www.repairforcecannock.co.uk

E: info@repairforcecannock.co.uk

45 Brownhills Road Norton Canes (opposite Co-op)

OPEN: Mon-Fri 9am-5pm Sat 9am-4pm

## Blinds & Curtains

### AB-Blinds & Carpets

Vertical / Venetian  
Roman / Roller /  
Shutters  
Wooden / Pleated

4 Vertical Blinds Fitted  
From **ONLY**  
**£189**

Any Genuine Free Phone 0800 0347111  
Quote Beaten Mobile 07517 875138

32A Cannock Shopping Centre. www.ab-blinds.co.uk

## Builders

**N+B N+B**  
Building Services Ltd Plastering Services

**Wet and dry plastering, boarding, stud work, rendering, tiling, painting and decorating**

★ Garage Conversions ★ Loft Conversions

★ Extensions ★ Doors and Windows

★ Fascias and Guttering ★ Landscaping

★ Electrics and Plumbing ★ Plastering

★ Block Paving

**All Building Work Undertaken**

67 Redwood Drive,  
Burntwood, Staffordshire  
07854 544516 or 01543 672375  
Email: nigel@nbbuildingservices.com  
www.nbbuildingservices.com



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REFURBISHMENTS  
PROPERTY MAINTENANCE, KITCHENS,  
BATHROOMS, CARPENTRY & PLASTERING  
EXTENSIONS - ALTERATIONS  
ALL WORK GUARANTEED

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PMURPHY@HOTMAIL.COM

## Business Services

### VIRTUAL OFFICE ADDRESS SERVICE

A prestigious address for your business.  
Confidential, discreet and secure.  
The right image at an affordable price.

**SAME DAY SET UP AVAILABLE**

London & Midlands Management Services  
Watling Chambers 214 Watling St. Cannock WS11 0BD  
**01543 572561**  
www.mailaddressservice.co.uk

## Builders Merchants

### Vine Builders Merchants

**OVER 10 DIFFERENT TYPES OF BEAUTIFUL DECORATIVE GRAVEL IN STOCK**

Washed Concrete Sand £30

Hard Core Mot £30

Ballast £30, Cement £4 per bag

10mm & 20mm Gravel

Timber Sleepers Timber Decking

Fencing, Top Soil

**TANALISED TIMBER NOW IN STOCK**

**BEST QUALITY ARTIFICIAL GRASS IN STOCK**

**PLASTIC DRAINAGE PIPES & FITTINGS**

Walkmill Lane, Bridgtown, Cannock WS11 0LN 01543 579559

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### Simply Doors Walsall

Internal & External Door Suppliers & Fitters

**6 internal pre-finished doors fully fitted for £425 complete with handles**

**External UPVC and composite doors also available**

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01922 623151 or 07810 122133  
www.simplydoorswalsall.co.uk

Late night opening  
Thursdays till 7pm

## Carpet & Upholstery Cleaning

### Crown ChemDry

Established in 1993 by Barry & Hazel Hicks

Carpet & Upholstery  
Cleaning  
Specialists.

Leather & Curtain  
Cleaning.



www.crownchemdry.co.uk

**01543 275679**

Carpet & Fabric  
Protection.

Senior Citizens  
Discounts.



**To advertise your business and reach more than 82,000 potential customers...**

**1**

Call us on...  
**01543 465341**

**2**

E-mail us at...  
Sarah.winfield.jones@expressandstar.co.uk

**3**

Post to...  
Sarah Jones, Cannock Chronicle,  
Queen Square, Cannock. WS11 1ES



# Local Specialists



## Carpet & Upholstery Cleaning

www.steamgeniemidlands.co.uk

E-mail: mark@steamgeniemidlands.co.uk

**Steam Genie**



Midlands  
PROFESSIONAL  
CARPET & UPHOLSTERY CLEANING  
MARK - 07976 526 848

## Double Glazing

**WINDOW DOCTOR**

GLAZING REPAIRS, DOORS & WINDOW REPAIRS  
MISTY & BROKEN GLASS REPLACED.  
WE REPAIR HANDLES, HINGES, SEALS, PATIO'S,  
WINDOW & DOOR LOCKS.

**10 YR GUARANTEE**

**01543 504900 24 HRS**

**07748 108035**

Est 30  
years

12 WELLINGTON DRIVE, CANNOCK WS11 1PU  
Credit & Debit cards taken

## Driveways

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**BLOCK PAVING**

**Tarmac**

and all aspects of landscaping

**Fully Insured**

Free advice and quotations  
All work guaranteed

Telephone 01543 676904

## Fencing

Bringing  
your garden  
to life...

**Treeway**  
fencing ltd

- FENCING PANELS
- TRELLIS WORK
- GATES
- CONCRETE POSTS & GRAVEL
- BOARDS
- BESPOKE PANELS
- RAILS, POSTS & BOARDS
- GARDEN ACCESSORIES
- GARDEN BARK
- DECKING
- RAILWAY SLEEPERS

Unit 9 Cannock Wood, Industrial Estate, Cannock  
Wood Street, Hazel Slade, Hednesford, WS12 0PL

Tel: 01543 425893 www.treeway.co.uk

## Gardening

**Harry Albert**  
**Tree Care**



- Tree Work • Stump Grinding • Tree Removal
- Hedges Cut • Ground Clearances • NO JOB too small

All aspects of tree work undertaken including stump grinding  
and complete tree removal. Hedge work also undertaken at very  
competitive prices also ground clearances.

Licensed Waste Carrier. All work carried out by Harry  
Please contact me on: 07946 442210 or 01889 583541  
www.harryalbert.co.uk

## J P Techniclean

Carpets, Upholstery, Curtains, Leather  
Carpets cleaned from £15  
Upholstery from £10  
Curtains from £12  
Leather from £15

**0800 511 8454 Freephone**  
**07932 766162 Mobile**

Fully insured, all work guaranteed  
Trust A Trader for 20 years

www.jptechniclean.co.uk Est. 1994

## Taylor's Carpet and Upholstery Cleaning

Sensible prices  
No Gimmicks  
No Extras  
No Job Too Big or Small  
Call Lee  
**01543 490319**  
**07816 407233**

## Computers

**Cannock**  
Computer Services  
More than 20 years experience in the IT industry

- Computer Repairs
- Laptop Repairs
- Technical Support
- Consultancy

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www.cannockcomputerservices.co.uk

**Local Specialists**

Our Specialist Section  
offers you a wide range  
of local businesses  
and tradesman to deal  
with your needs and  
requirements.

## Decorating

**City & Guilds**

**I. THOMAS**  
Painting / Decorating  
Interior & Exterior

**Rooms from £60**

30 Years Experience • All Work Guaranteed

**Call Ian 07789 956 247**

**WESTCOT**  
**CONTRACTORS LTD**

38 Years Experience

TARMACADAM CONCRETE BLOCK PAVING  
LEADING DOMESTIC & COMMERCIAL CONTRACTORS COVERING  
LICHFIELD AND STAFFORDSHIRE

- Domestic Drives • Patios • Tennis Courts construction
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Free quotations - All work guaranteed

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**Office 01543 251416**  
email: westcot.contractors.ltd@gmail.com

## Electricians

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Inspection and Testing /  
Rewires / Consumer Units  
25 Years' Experience  
Fully Insured  
Competitive Rates

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**MB electric**

All domestic and commercial  
electrical works undertaken  
Home rewiring from £800

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local service call:  
01543 580355  
07939 503905  
mbelectric.co.uk

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Qualified Electrician

\* Reasonable Rates  
\* Free Quotes  
\* No Call Out Charges  
Home: 01543 876655  
Mobile: 07716 665850

**Local Specialists**

**No. 1 Fencing Direct No. 1**  
**Autumn Special**

Special offer 6x5 Panels £14.50 each

10 bays fully fitted from £490  
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# Fundraising boxing nights a real winner

CHARITY boxing nights in Wolverhampton have proved a real knockout with more than £2,000 being raised.

Kaos Kickboxing coach Dylan Fitzpatrick has organised the events to raise money for the Deanesley ward at New Cross Hospital. Five such events have been held so far, the latest in November, featuring 11 bouts, and more are planned next year.

Dylan began the nights in memory of his late grandmother Mary Scott, who died of cancer at the age of 91 two years ago, before she was due to be admitted to the ward. However he has since set out to raise as much as he can for the staff.

Kaos Kickboxing operates from a church hall, in Owen Road, Wolverhampton. Fight nights are staged at Jacks Bar, in Frederick Street.

The next fundraiser is on March 24. Sign up nights are on January 2 and 22. To register, or for tickets, contact [kaoskickboxing@hotmail.com](mailto:kaoskickboxing@hotmail.com) or call 07772 658708.

# Darters thrown up on opposite ends of draw

TIPTON duo Scott Baker and Jamie Hughes have been pulled on opposite sides of the draw for the 2018 BDO World Championship.

The Black Country throwers can't toe the oche together until, at least, the semi-finals after the action begins at Lakeside.

The 33rd staging of the BDO tournament will take place in Frimley Green from January 6-14, live on Channel Four and BT Sport.

Baker makes his worlds debut after finishing 23rd in the BDO rankings for 2017. He'll be up against Belgium's Andy Beatens, the current Belgium Masters and England Masters champion, in a first-to-three sets tie.

The winner will take on either former WBO world titlist Scott Mitchell or Lithuania's Darius Labanaukas in the best-of-five sets second round.

Third seed Hughes, a two-time worlds semi-finalist, won't know who his first opponent will be until the preliminary round tie between Canada's David Cameron or German Open qualifier Michael Unterbuchner, before a second round tie against Martin Phillips, Craig Caldwell or Daniel Day.

# Sports groups open to share of cashpot

YOUNG sporting individuals and clubs can win a share of more than £600,000 in the Healthy Communities Scheme run by Persimmon Homes.

The programme was launched in May and closes at the end of December. It is part of a national initiative to give away cash to sports groups and individuals. A host of regional prizes of £750 are up for grabs every month, with amateur sports teams and individuals aged 21 years and under eligible. The money is to be spent on sports kit, equipment, coaching or facilities.

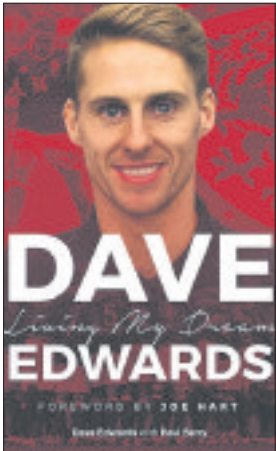
A shortlist of 30 will be drawn up in January from all the entries nationwide. They will go forward to a national final to be determined by public vote. The winning club or individual will receive £200,000 with £50,000 each going to two runners-up.

Persimmon Homes West Midlands, which has its headquarters in Wolverhampton, has chosen individuals and clubs from its region, including Gornal Athletic Mini Minor Kickers and a Stourbridge archer.

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Dave Edwards spent nearly a decade at Wolves



The Living the Dream book



Dave as a football-mad schoolboy

# New chapter as Wolves old boy lives the dream

HE'S made more than 400 professional appearances and helped Wales reach the semi-finals of Euro 2016.

Now, Wolves favourite Dave Edwards has put pen to paper to document his story and road in his new book, *Living My Dream*.

It all began in rural Shropshire for the former Molineux midfielder, who says he was just a "farm boy" in Shrewsbury when he first kicked a ball.

Now, the 31-year-old has enjoyed a career in which he has been praised by some of the game's greats, with Real Madrid and Wales star Gareth Bale hailing his book "a great read".

All of Edwards's royalties from the book sales, released this month, will go to the Midlands-based Little Rascals Foundation.

Edwards, who recently left Wolves for Reading after nine years in the old gold and black, said: "Being a footballer is a privileged existence – it is one I have never taken for granted and one which has given me some unbelievable experiences."

## Insight

"Hopefully this book will give people an insight into what it means for a farm boy from Shrewsbury to follow his dream, making it both to the Premier League and being part of a Wales squad which reached the semi-finals at their first major tournament in 58 years."

The footballer started his career in the youth set-up at Shrewsbury Town in 1996 where he made more than 100 appearances. After a season at Luton, he was snapped up by then Wolves boss Mick McCarthy in 2008.

*Living My Dream* is described as a "frank and fascinating story" – outlining what it took for Edwards to achieve his life's ambition.

It describes how his dedication and commitment to the game he loves has enabled him to enjoy a successful 16-year career, spanning the top five English divisions from the Conference to the Premier League.

Bale, who played with Edwards at the Euro 2016 competition in France last year, is among the footballers to back the book.

He said: "A fantastic behind-the-scenes insight of

## SPORTING FEATURE

By Tom Oakley

**"Dave is always very interesting and thoughtful with his opinions, and is always happy to front up and face the media and supporters through the good times and the bad."**

what it was like in the Welsh camp at Euro 2016. A special time and a great read."

Woven into the story of his club career, *Living My Dream* is also a behind-the-scenes account of Dave's brave fightback, after a serious injury in January 2016, to make the starting line-up in Wales' opening game in Bordeaux at that summer's European Championships.

He is the first player from the Welsh squad to reveal just what it was like for a player cocooned inside the team bubble at the Euros. He reveals how the Welsh players thrived on and forged an untouchable team spirit.

It tells the story of a family man, who feels fortunate and privileged to have enjoyed the career he has – a "fascinating" insight into the day-to-day life of a professional footballer, according to England goalkeeper Joe Hart and "best mate", who wrote the book's foreword.

Hart said: "Dave Edwards has been one of my best mates in football, all the way through my career and this book offers some great behind-the-scenes insight into what it is like for a player at a major tournament, and some of the secrets behind Wales' spectacular success."

The book, written with the help of Wolves' head of media Paul Berry, is set to be released this month.

It has been published by St Davids Press, [www.st-davids-press.wales](http://www.st-davids-press.wales)

Berry said it was a privilege to work with Edwards. "Like so many football fans, I thought the story of Wales at Euro 2016, their first major tournament for 58 years, was a fantastic one to follow," he said.

"It was made even more interesting having worked with Dave for so many years at Wolves, as well as Wayne Hennessey and Sam Vokes."

"All three of those players were great to work with, and the sort of characters whom you always want to be successful. The further the tournament went on, the more I thought that the idea of a book telling the behind-the-scenes story would be one which would appeal to all football fans."

After Edwards returned from France, over a spell of about six months, him and Paul had regular conversations at the training ground to put together an account of life at Euro 2016.

This included chats about the rest of his career leading up to the tournament, including his recovery from the injury which for a time put his participation in doubt.

## Foundation

He added: "Dave is one of those footballers who is always very interesting and thoughtful with his opinions, and is always happy to front up and face the media and supporters through the good times and the bad."

"He had also kept a journal during the tournament, which provided a really good foundation for that section of the book."

"For me it was a privilege to listen to Dave talk so openly and honestly about life as a professional footballer, and that journey through so many ups and downs to turning out on the biggest stage of all at the European Championships."

"Along with the behind-the-scenes account of what it was like for the Welsh squad at Euro 2016, there are several chapters devoted to Dave's club career with both Shrewsbury and Wolves, and hopefully plenty of stories which fans will enjoy reading."

"It was a fascinating insight into the life of someone whom, by his own admission, made the absolute most out of the talent at his disposal and has, as the title suggests, lived his dream!"

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## Pathway to success for handball girls

GIRLS' handball is enjoying a boom with the formation of a new club thanks to funding from Cameron Homes.

The club, based at Chase Terrace Technology College in Burntwood, will provide 13-to-17-year-old girls with a pathway to develop from a beginner to playing for another of the clubs Cameron supports – Cannock Olympia and Sutton Coldfield-based side B73.

Nenad Popovic, the Midlands Academy manager for England Handball and former head of PE at Cardinal Griffin School, Cannock, said: "We had a good boys' handball team and girls wanted to play."

"They initially trained with the boys before playing themselves, and they went on to win the under-16s National Schools Championships.

"I know the managing director at Cameron, whose daughter used to play, and I said 'imagine what we could do in schools because the girls around here could be something special'.

"Cameron have given us £45,000 over three years to develop girls handball and we now have 15 schools involved, and recently had our finals at Aldersley Stadium where 1,000 players were involved."

The initiatives in schools have seen more girls take an interest in the sport.

Cannock Olympia and B73 have both been successful and are expected to benefit from the new club with Popovic feeling there was a need to develop different levels to get more girls involved.

"Different levels are what we want. So they'll play at Chase for about four weeks then play against the B73 side so they can get competitive experience. After that girls can progress from the Chase team to the B73 and Olympia sides."

Anyone interested can email scoreuk@gmail.com

## Teams are left high and dry by weather

HEDNESFORD Town were thwarted again on Tuesday night following the postponement of their game on Saturday.

The Pitmen's Staffordshire Senior Cup game against Lichfield City was called off. It followed the postponement of the weekend's league clash with Buxton. No new date has yet been scheduled for the Evo-Stik Northern Premier Division clash.

Two home games follow before Christmas, against Barwell on Saturday and Shaw Lane on December 23 before a side visit Rushall Olympic on Boxing Day.

The weather has also left Heath Hayes frustrated. Saturday's game against Pershore Town was called off and the J-W Hunt clash with Alvechurch followed suit on Tuesday.

On Saturday, Hayes are due to make the short journey to Lichfield City for a Midland League Division One game.

## Black belts hit golden seam in Italy



The four successful EWSKA fighters

TWO Burntwood black belts struck gold at the United World Karate championships. Deradie Harding and Matt Broadhead were part of a four-strong contingent from EWSKA Chasetown representing England at the six-day competition in Italy.

Harding, the oldest of the quartet at 47, won the ladies' veterans gold medal, while Broadhead, 25, successfully defended the +85kg adults title he won last time and brought home a silver in the team rotation.

Fellow EWSKA member Adam Shaw, who is 18, took part in the under-21s heavyweight kumite and returned with two bronze medals, for the team discipline and team rotation category.

Finlay Lewis was the fourth club member to take part. At the age of 14 he was taking part in his second world championships, and reached the quarter-final in his under-14 category. Chief instructor Neil Poynton said: "I am so pleased for them all. To take part in a sport they all enjoy so much at such an event will be something they can be very proud of."

The quartet are looking for support and sponsorship. Anyone interested can call Julie 07794 010839. For anyone wishing to join EWSKA, contact 07393 0400243 or 07969 833592 for details of training sessions.

## Top bowlers line up for classic event

A TOP-class field will vie for the £500 top prize in the Les & Mel Evans Memorial Bowls Classic next year.

The 2018 running of the well-known Easter Monday competition held at Chads Moor Progressive Working Men's Club, is being renamed in memory of Mel Evans MBE as well as his father Les, whose name the competition has taken for 37 consecutive years.

In all, £2,000 has been put forward, with £250 for the runner-up, £125 for the semi-finalists, £100 for reaching the quarter-finals and £75 for the last 16. Play gets under way at 10.30am on April 2 in accordance with the BCGBA dress code. The £25 entry fee must be received no later than January 31.

The competition field is as follows: Stuart Rutter (Shropshire); Paul Bailey (South Yorkshire); Craig Barker (Staffordshire); Michael Beer (Shropshire); Ant Bracken (W&W); Tom Pritchard (W&W); Chris Brown (South Yorkshire); Paul Evans (Staffordshire); David May (Derbyshire); Andy Thornton (Cumbria); David East (Staffordshire); Gary Owen (Potteries); Gareth Herbert (W&W); Colin Beaman (Shropshire); Tommy Johnstone (Cheshire); Paul Lamb (North Mids); Nathan Dawes (Staffordshire); Leighton Roberts (Wales); Peter Farmer (Shropshire); Darrell Handley (Staffordshire); Ross Meese (South Yorkshire); Darren Plenderleith (North Mids); Ryan Prosser (W&W); Wayne Rogers (Shropshire); Scott Simpson (Staffordshire); Greg Smith (W&W); Gordon Hawkins (Staffordshire); Phil Lee (Merseyside); Glynn Storer (Staffordshire); Ben Percival (North Mids); Chris Ward (Staffordshire); Callum Wraight (Shropshire).

Hot and cold refreshments will be available all day and there will be a bookmaker in attendance. Further details from competition secretary Cliff Johnson on 07765 534101 or email cliffjohnson835@gmail.com

## League kicks off to tackle obesity

A FOOTBALL league run in Walsall to tackle obesity will be launched at the Banks's Stadium in the new year.

Man v Fat kicks off at on January 19 and will run for 14 consecutive weeks. Before each game, a weigh-in takes place followed by a 30 minute six-a-side football match. Players can earn extra goal bonuses for their team depending on the number of pounds lost.

The final result of each match consists of not only the score on the pitch, but the score from the scales. Entry fee is free. Join at [www.manvfat.com/football](http://www.manvfat.com/football), call 0845 163 0042 or email [football@manvfat.com](mailto:football@manvfat.com)

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# HELPERS PITCH IN BUT NO WIN

Chasetown 0 Stamford 2  
**CHASETOWN boss Scott Dundas was disappointed not to reward the Scholars' loyal army of volunteers with a sixth consecutive victory on Saturday.**

More than 20 people – including star midfielder Will Whieldon and his family – spent five hours clearing snow from the Scholars Ground pitch to get the match with Stamford on.

But Chasetown's rise up the Evo-Stik League Division One South table was brought to a screeching halt by an outstanding display from visiting goalkeeper Daniel Haystead.

However, the volunteers and the performance still gave Dundas a couple of reasons to be cheerful. "They really rallied round with 20-plus volunteers to get the snow off the pitch," he said.

### Error

"They worked extremely hard for four or five hours, and it's inevitable when stuff like that happens that it goes against you in the game.

"They are a great bunch, that's what we are all here for, it was great for them to do that."

A defensive error allowed Ben George to score early on, with Liam Adams doubling the lead later on against the run of play.

"We are a little bit disappointed with the result, but not the performance," Dundas added.

"The lads played really well, but Stamford had an inspired performance from their keeper."

In recent weeks, the Scholars have shot up the table, with five straight wins taking them away from the threat of a relegation battle into the thick of the play-off mix.

Dundas said: "It's crazy how quickly it turns round, but we have to be careful because it could turn round the other way as well."

The Staffordshire Senior Cup tie against Stoke City on Tuesday night was called off. Scholars are due to travel to Lincoln United for a league game on Saturday. Kick off at 3pm.

## Pupils net tips from England ace



Beth Cobden with budding young netball stars as she pays a visit to her old school, Five Ways Primary, at Langholm Drive, Heath Hayes

ENGLAND international netball player Beth Cobden took a trip down memory lane as she visited her former primary school.

The 24-year-old returned to Five Ways Primary, Heath Hayes and led sessions and spoke to pupils. The school is looking to bring back a competitive netball team.

Cobden, who plays for 2017 Super League runners-up Loughborough Lightning, was delighted to return.

"It was so lovely," she said. "The whole day was brilliant. We had activities, sessions and assemblies, and it was a bit of fun for everyone, so I was so happy to be asked."

Cobden was invited back to Five Ways was PE teacher Iain Redpath, who said: "I know her mom and dad as I went to college with them."

"We're all in teaching so we cross paths quite often."

He added: "We've restarted the netball team for the first time in six years so I contacted Beth to see if she could come and inspire."

"It was fantastic. We've got 14 in our netball team at the moment so I'd like to think more will follow."

"But even so, what Beth said about putting in 100 per cent effort and dedication into sport is great advice for everyone to hear."

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